

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL  
CENTER FOR LOWELL HISTORY  
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

**THE WORKING PEOPLE OF LOWELL  
LOWELL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK  
MARY BLEWETT/MARTHA MAYO**

**INFORMANT: MADELINE BERGERON  
INTERVIEWER: PAT COBLE  
DATE: NOVEMBER 1, 1985**

**M = MADELINE  
P = PAT**

**Tape 85.25**

P: And I'm interviewing Madeline Bergeron today, November 1, 1985 at 65 Endicott Street in Lowell.

M: I hope your comfortable, because (--)

P: Yes. Ah huh.

M: You are? Because we can go in the kitchen

P: Yah. No, I think this will be fine. Um, now let's start talking about your parents first. Where were they born Madeline?

M: Mother was born in St. Hyacinthe in Canada.

P: Umhm

M: And my father was born in Alexandria, New York.

P: I see, and when, how did they meet? Do you know?

M: Well they met in Lowell.

P: I see.

M: My mother worked for Putnam, it was the D.L. Page's now, you know at the square.

(P: Umhm) What's that ice cream place there with the clock?

P: Oh, Burbeck's or one of the (--)

M: Yah, I don't know the name now, but it used to be D. L. Page's. But when mother worked there she was a young girl. That's where my father use to go in, he worked for the railroad. The bus, it wasn't a bus it the horse drawn (P: Carriages, ah huh) carriages that my father work on.

P: I see.

M: He was a conductor on the horse drawn trolleys.

P: Uh huh. What age were your parents when they first came to Lowell, do you know?

M: Oh mother was three years old.

P: Hm

M: She had a stepmother. And my uncle went and got her and brought her to Lowell here to a family by the name of LeBlanc. Her two older sisters had come. They had brought them here too.

P: Ah..

M: And these LeBlanc people brought them up till they were able to go to work.

P: I see

M: They worked around the house. This woman kept boarders and roomers.

P: Umhm

M: And they helped for there board and room, the children.

P: I see. They were no relationship to the LeBlanc's then.

M: No

P: They were just people that took them in (M: Yes) and raise them.

M: Yes, friends. Yup.

P: Umhm. And what about your father then? Do you know how old was when he came over to Lowell?

M: That I couldn't tell you.

P: Umhm

M: I couldn't tell you, but they moved to West Sixth Street (P: Umhm) when they came here, and my grandfather ran a Lumber Yard, coal and wood.

P: I see

M: They'd sell it by the bag, mother said that.

P: So your parents met when your father came into the shop where your mother was working?

M: At the restaurant

P: At the restaurant, umhm.

M: My mother was a waitress in Putnam's, the name of the place was Putnam.

P: Umhm

M: And was later sold to the D. L. Page. That was right at the square downtown where the big clock is.

P: Oh yes.

M: You must know where that is

P: Yes. Yah, umhm. And then they courted for awhile, and then do you know when (--)

M: Five years I think mother told me.

P: Oh, five years. Umhm.

M: Yes, and then they got married. And they lived on East Merrimack Street, like facing the Immaculate Conception Church.

P: I see

M: They had an apartment there.

P: Ah huh. And well where were you born?

M: I was born on Franklin Street.

P: Umhm.

M: But I was only five months old when they moved to Cross Street. And there, I stayed there till, twenty years old we moved away from there.

P: I see

M: I was twenty. So I was born and brought up on Cross Street.

P: On Cross Street. How many children were in your family?

M: Two

P: Two

M: My sister and I.

P: Uh huh.

M: We had a brother that died before either one of us was born.

P: Oh. Were you the oldest daughter then or?

M: No, I'm the baby

P: Your the baby of the family, I see.

M: Yes, my sister, she died here two years ago.

P: Oh. Oh I see. Um, you were born in 1897?

M: Yes

P: And you moved to Cross Street then.

M: Cross Street, 138 Cross Street.

P: When you were five months old. Um, what could you tell, what can you tell me about the house on Cross St?.

M: It was a nine tenements they called it in those days.

P: Umhm.

M: Nine, and we lived in the back in the downstairs

P: Umhm

M: Nine apartments, yah. We were Irish and French, and there was two or three families of Greeks that lived on our street around, you know. We all got along fine.

P: Oh, that's good. (M: yes) What about in your tenement house, were they all French Canadian there, or was there (--)

M: Upstairs was Mrs. Laporte that her grandsons are running the Laporte Drug Store on Mammoth Road.

P: Umhm.

M: She had one son. She lived on the second floor. On the third floor were the Richards. They all come from Canada. (P: umhm) And the Irish people, Mrs., downstairs, she was born here, but her (stutters) folks McDonaughs, I don't know where they come from.

M: But the third floor they were from Ireland

M: Mrs. (Crow) in the front was from Ireland, and Mrs. Sullivan downstairs, I don't think she came from Ireland, but they were Irish.

P: Umhm

M: Yah, and on the third floor was a Theriaults, are French.

P: Ah I see. So a nice mixture.

M: Yes.

P: Yes.

M: It was so nice in those days, yes.

P: Yah. Where you born at home do you know, or did your mother go to the hospital?

M: No, no I was born at home.

P: You were born at home.

M: Yes

P: Do you remember the house when you were growing up as far as the oh, what the kitchen was like?

M: Yes, oh yes. Yes.

P: Would you like to describe that?

M: It's still there.

P: The house is still there.

M: Yes. If you know where Pappas the undertaker is, the Greek, Pappas the undertaker?

P: Umhm.

M: Corner of Willie and Cross. Well they knocked all those houses down that were there, but our block is still there.

P: I see

M: It's 138, three stories, yes it still there. Oh yes, and the kitchen floor is as white as snow.

P: Oh yah.

M: Mother had [unclear]

P: [Interrupts] Did you have linoleum? Was there linoleum?

M: Not (--) The last years we were there.

P: I see.

M: But I remember when I was a little girl my mother would scrub the floor, and they made there own...

P: Rugs?

M: Rugs. Yes

P: So there was a rug on the floor and then (--)

M: Two, we had two rugs on the floor. And then we had two bedrooms off the kitchen.

P: Umhm.

M: Then on the left there was a door there, and that went into the living room. And from the living room mother had another bedroom, and that's were we would go when we were punished.

P: Oh, to the front bedroom, yah. Did you share a room with your sister?

M: Yes

P: Ah huh. In the kitchen, was there an ice box or anything to keep the food in, cold?

M: We had the ice box in the front hall. In the front hall the stairs went up like that to the second floor, and mother had the ice box there.

P: Umhm.

M: That's where we kept our, there was no room in the kitchen.

P: I see.

M: No, we had no bathrooms in those days.

P: Oh what would you do?

M: We just had a toilet. And then we had the pantry. So mother would take the big wooden tub that she washed in during the week, and put it in front of the stove, and heat up some water, and we took our bath there. Every week I was the first one, then my sister.

P: I see. Was it every Saturday?

M: Every Saturday .

P: It was every Saturday. Yup. And then what would you (--) Was there on outhouse or something to use for a bathroom?

M: No, we had a toilet.

P: Oh.

M: We had a toilet.

P: You had a toilet

M: Just a toilet, see.

P: I see.

M: You'd open the door and you had to walk about 6-7 feet, and then there was a toilet. In the other place, the other door was a pantry.

P: I see, umhm

M: Yah, all shelves

P: Yah

M: Today I think they've put bathrooms in there now.

P: Well that's whay I'm saying, right.

M: I'd love to go see it.

P: Oh I bet you would.

M: But they say they're all Greeks living there now.

P: Oh, uh huh.

M: Puerto Ricans.

P: Yah

M: Strange.

P: What about, how did you heat the apartment?

M: Coal and wood.

P: With coal, umhm.

M: Yah, my sister and I used to have the job of going down the cell. Mother had to go to work. My father was taken away when I was on eight years old.

P: Oh I see

M: So mother had to go to work. And my sister and I used to bring up the wood, and the coal (unclear)

P: Uh huh.

M: That's how we heated.

P: Was it like a coal stove?

M: Yes

P: Or?



M: The big black, the big black stoves.

P: All right. Okay.

M: Yah, that's what we had, a big black stove.

P: And so your mother would cook on this stove also?

M: Oh yes, and bake bread that high.

P: Oh.

M: She'd make five loaves of bread.

P: Oh my.

M: Yes.

P: What work did your mother do while (--)

M: She was a weaver in the boott mills.

P: Oh my, uh huh.

M: She ran eighteen looms. And mother was short like me. And they had to build platforms for her all around her looms so she could reach to draw in the threads if they break, you know.

P: Yes, yah.

M: I still have the her, the draw [iron].

P: Uh huh.

M: But she use to draw in the threads from the harness (P: umhm) if they'd break. You'd have to find it and put it back into the harness.

P: Oh yes.

M: Have you seen them?

P: No I haven't.

M: No. I was a weaver too.

P: And you did the same work then that your mother did?

M: No. I didn't work in a cotton mill. I worked in a woolen mill.

P: Oh, I see.

M: Where we made the bunting for the flags, (P: Umhm) for the battleships.

P: Right, right. So you were about eight years old when your father passed away?

M: I was eight years old. He didn't pass away. (silence for 7-8 seconds)

P: [I'm erasing this part in request of Madeline Bergeron]

P: ...That time or did she just go to work?

M: Oh, she only went to work afterwards.

P: Afterwards, I see.

M: Yes.

P: So were you in school then, when she was (--)

M: Yes, I was in the Cross Street School. I left the Cross Street School when I was eight years old. And from eight years old we went, I went to St. Joseph's School.

P: Was that a parochial?

M: Parochial school yes

P: Parochial school, umhm.

M: And I graduated from there. And I went one year to high school, days.

P: Umhm.

M: And mother got bursitis in her back and she couldn't work anymore. So I had to leave high school, and I went to evening high school and finished my high school evenings.

P: Oh wonderful!

M: I worked, I worked at the Lowell Weaving days. I wasn't weaving there, I was reeling, at the Lowell Weaving. And I'd walk to Marginal Street from Cross Street, to Marginal back to Cross; have my supper, wash up and go to school for 7 o'clock, high

school. And come home at quarter past nine, and sit down and do my home work for the next night.

P: Oh, my and what time would you get up in the morning?

M: 5 o'clock.

P: Oh..

M: I had to be to work at 6 o'clock! And I worked 54 hours a week for five dollars a week.

P: Oh my goodness.

M: Yes mame. And I was there three months, and I done good. So they gave me a dollar raise. I got six dollars.

P: Six, oh. Did your sister work there too?

M: No

P: No

M: She worked at the Hamilton. That's way up on Jackson Strett. She worked, she was a drawing in girl. She fixed all the big beams, tried to put it threw the harness for the weavers

P: Umhm

M: Yes, that's what she did.

P: Ah, let me see.

M: She got married young. She was twenty-one when she got married.

P: Oh I see.

M: Yes.

P: Did you have any other relatives in the area? Were there any (--)

M: Oh my aunts, yes, mother's aunts. My mother's sisters. Oh is that being taped?

P: Yes, umhm.

M: Oh my!

P: You didn't want it to?

M: I didn't want to tell that my father (--)

P: Oh.. Okay, I can erase that part, yah. I think what you said anyway, when you pointed to me I don't (--)

M: Yah, I don't think, but you (--)

P: I'll take care of that off.

M: All right. Thank you. Yes, I had aunts and uncles on my father's side. Then on my mother's side, oh yes. I had an aunt in Tyngsboro. She had a big farm there, and that's where my sister and I would go in the summer, when we were small, because mother was working.

P: Umhm

M: So my aunt would take care of us on the farm. Mother would come Saturday and Sunday to see us out there.

P: Oh I see. What about your grandparents? Do you remember them at all?

M: Oh, I don't remember mother's, mother, because mother's mother died after she was born.

P: That's right, you said that she was raised by the (--)

M: By the stepmother. I, I never met her stepmother, but I met my grandfather, he came to our house a lot. Yah. (P: Umhm) He was living in Hartford then. Then on my father's side, yes, not my grandmother. I never knew my grandmother

P: Oh.

M: They named me after her, but I never knew her. She died when I was just a baby, but my grandfather yes. My two grandfathers I knew well.

P: Oh, that's nice. Um, let me see. [Pause] Can you remember any of the type of food your mother fixed? Was there anything special that you would have for Sunday dinner, or (--)

M: Yes

P: Reminicse about that,

M: My mother used to make lemon drops. They were like little flat cakes with a pointed top. She'd cut the point off. She'd put bananas in the middle. That was Sunday, bananas and jam, and then she'd cover it up with the other piece she took off, and she'd put whipped cream on the top. That was a treat for Sundays. Mother baked all her pies. She baked all her breads. She worked very hard.

P: Would you have any kind of special meat on Sunday? Was it (--)

M: A roast

P: A roast

M: Or she'd have duck.

P: Ah.

M: With the apple stuffing.

P: Oh that sounds good

M: Yes, oh she was a good cook my mother, she learned a lot in the restaurant where she worked

P: Umhm

M: Yes, she wasn't a French cook.

P: I was going to ask you if she was. No.

M: No. She was more of an American cook.

P: Umhm, what it always the same every Sunday? Duck every Sunday?

M: Oh no, no.

P: No.

M: She changed. Yes, oh yes, she could cook anything, mother, but during the week my sister and I took turns. She'd peel the potatoes, and put them on. So when mother got home the potatoes were cooked. Mother only had to cook the meat, or whatever she was going to (--) Or she'd make pancakes for us, you know.

P: Ah huh. What other chores did you have beside bringing the, you said you had to bring the coal up, and the wood up for the wood stove?

M: And we had to dust. We had to keep the place dusted. And Saturday morning mother wasn't, she had to work at 12 o'clock. So my sister and I use to shake out the rugs [laughs] and do the dusting. Mother had her washings to do on Saturdays, or sometimes (--)

P: Oh, how would they wash? How would they do there wash in those days?

M: In these like wooden tubs like I told you (P: Oh, that's right) we took our baths. She had two, and then she had like a frame with a ringer. We had a ringer, and we used to take turns. And mother would put the, after she'd scrub it on the board. I still have her board. The board, and she'd put it in the ringer and we'd turn it. My sister, we'd each take turns.

P: Then would it go into a rinse tub from there?

M: Yes, yes in the blue one.

P: Yes.

M: Yes

P: And then you would ring it out again?

M: Yes.

P: Out [unclear] for the rinse water?

M: Yes.

P: Ah huh.

M: And the sheets and the pillow cases, she use to have a big boiler and she put it on the stove with, I remember she'd put a little [pot hash] into the water to bleach them, you know, so they'd get white.

P: Oh yes, right, get nice and white.

M: Oh yes.

P: Yah. And how would you try them then? How would they dry their wash?

M: In the back yard, we had clothes line

P: Oh, uh huh. Even in the winter?

M: In the winter.

P: Yah.

M: At two o'clock in the morning my mother would be hanging her clothes out.

P: Hm.

M: And had to get to work for six o'clock.

P: Yah.

M: Yah, they had it hard, huh.

P: Yah, they did.

M: And she lived till 95.

P: Is that right?

M: Yes, I had her 16 years (P: Ah, uh huh) before she died.

P: Oh, uh huh.

M: She was happy.

P: Yah. Well she must of been a healthy woman?

M: Yes, yah. She was a little bit of a (--)

P: What kind of soap would they use? Would they make there own soap?

M: Octagon soap, (P: Oh.yah) the bar soap, or (Fels Papta?), the brown soap?

P: Umhm, yup, yup. I remember that.

M: That's what we used for baths.

P: Oh, for baths.

M: Our bath too, oh yes.

P: [Laughs]

M: We use that for our bath, yes.

P: Would you iron the clothing too?

M: Mother did the ironing, yes.

P: How would they, would they (--)

M: She had a, it was like a frame, steel frame and there was room for two irons. So she'd put the two irons there, and mother had a handle that she clapped on to the iron. That's the kind of irons we had in those days. Their handle was separate. And when she'd take it out of there, she had to put the handle down and lift up a little clamp like. And ya, when it got cold she'd put that one back and take the other one out.

P: So the irons were on the stove still getting hot.

M: Yes.

P: And did they starch things too? Did they use starch?

M: Oh god yes. I starched

P: ([Laughs]

M: Oh god yes! She starched.

P: Would you have to make your own starch then?

M: Mother, yes. (P: Umhm)

M: She used to make it in a little dish pan. We had a little dish pan in the sink, and she make the starch there, and she'd starch all one piece by piece. The scarfs on the bureau, you know everything was starched

P: What about, can you remember the clothing you were when you were a young girl, or going to school and (--)

M: Mother made the panties for us, our petticoats. And then I had to have like a separate apron we wore over our uniform, not uniform, dresses in those days, at school. But we all had to have the bib aprons with the ruffle around here.

P: Well did everyone where the same type of dress to the parochial school?

M: No.

P: No?

M: Not in those days.



P: No (--) You didn't have a special (--)

M: No, we all, but all white aprons.

P: I see

M: Over the dresses

P: Umhm, and I imagine they were long?

M: Yes

P: Umhm

M: Down below the knee

P: Yah

M: Black stockings, and black high shoes.

P: Oh!

M: Yah.

P: Yah

M: I was proud my aunt had bought me some button shoes and, instead of lace.

P: Oh yes

M: They were buttoned

P: So that was a special, something special

M: And I had a little hook to button them.

P: Ah huh.

M: My aunt had bought those for me. And oh did I wear those shoes.

P: And you said your mother made most of your clothing then too?

M: Oh yes.

P: What about your coats in the winter? What type of heavy clothing did you wear, or (-  
-)

M: Well whatever she'd get. She'd buy it by the yard, or if someone gave her an old coat she'd rip it out like I did for my girls (clear throat). She'd rip it out and make it over for us.

P: Umhm

M: Yah

P: Do you remember where she brought her material. or (--)

M: Pollard's, and she used to go to a place [clears throat and pauses while she's thinking].

P: Was it in downtown Lowell?

M: Downtown, yah, she'd buy the material. And then I know she use to go to Billerica and buy, is it Faulkner's Mill? She use to buy clothes there too, material to make our clothes.

P: How would she get over to Billerica from here, from Lowell?

M: Trolley's (P: Oh) The trolley's.

P: So they had pretty good trolley service?

M: It was five cents

P: Is that right

M: And you'd get a transfer at the square to go to Billerica.

P: Ah huh. Did they have trolley's between most of the little outlining towns, say to Chelmsford or Tyngsboro or?

M: Oh yes!

P: Ah huh.

M: Five cents it use to cost us to go to my aunt's farm in Tyngsboro.

P: So that was the main transportation (M: Yes) was the trolleys?

M: Yes. Yes, the trolleys

P: For getting around. Let me see, and you started your school. How old were you, about five or six when you first went to school?

M: I was five years old.

P: Five years old

M: I have a picture here. (P: Oh) That's the Cross St. School. See if you can pick me out of here.

P: Oh.. Yes here, let me (--) I just saw your school picture, and you have such long nice curls. Can you describe how your mother use to make your curls?

M: With the rags. She'd put them up in rags everynight and tied the bottom, yes. My sister too.

P: Did you ever have pig tails, or was it mostly (--)

M: I did have pigtails when I went into St. Joseph's School, yes, and she'd turn them up and put the bow here. I had pigtails like this, and put a bow here. I had a bow on each side.

P: When would you get your hair washed? Every Saturday night when you got the bath? (Laughs Both)

M: Saturday in the sink.

P: I bet that was cold in the winter.

M: Huh? Yes but we (--) Also my mother was strict. Yes, every week our bath and our hair.

P: And then you went to church every Sunday I imagine?

M: Sunday, yes.

P: Yes. Now what church did you?

M: St. Joseph's. Ah, Saint Jean de Baptist!

P: Umhm.

M: Saint Jean de Baptist.

P: And was that near your home?

M: Oh yes. All we had to do was cross the North Common. From Cross St. we crossed the North Common, and from the North Common we'd go up a little street, Decatur Street, and there's the church, yes.

P: We were talking about the ice box that was out in the hall.

M: Yah, in the front hall

P: Would an ice man come and deliver ice for you then?

M: Yes. Daniel Gage with the trucks

P: Umhm

M: Yah.

P: Now they must of been horse drawn trucks?

M: Yes, two horses on the truck, yah

P: And how would you let them know you wanted ice?

M: We'd put the card in the window.

P: Ah.

M: We had a green card with Daniel Gage on it.

P: I see.

M: Ice. And when you wanted ice you'd put it in the window.

P: About how often you'd have to get it, everyday or every other day, or (--)

M: Like she'd get a big piece, and it would fill it up. And maybe by Wednesday she'd get a small piece, so Saturday he'd bring in a big piece, 25 cents I guess.

M: Oh yes, so about twice a week?

P: Yes

P: And you would get the (--)

M: Ice

P: The ice. How about getting your food, or doing your (--)

M: But see in the winter we didn't need ice.

P: Oh?

M: It was in the front hall, the refrigerator. The ice box was in the front hall.

P: Ice box.

M: So it kept cold there, and the food was cold too in the front hall.

P: So it was just in the summer.

M: In the summer we bought the ice.

P: Yah. Yah. How about milk? Was that delivered to your house too?

M: Yes, we had a milkman.

P: Umhm.

M: Yah, we had (--) Mother's cousin delivered for years, a LeBlanc from Dracut. We had him. And then I think we changed to Burbecks, and we had Burbecks for years and years.

P: Ah, where (--) Do you remember where your mother would buy the other food, say the vegetables, and the meat, and the (--)

M: Yes, Keefe's market on Broadway, he was out store man. And during the week if my sister and I needed something, we had a book and we'd go and buy what we needed, and he'd put it in the book, and mother would pay him on Saturday.

P: I see. Did your mother get paid once a week then at the mill?

M: That I remember, yes, once a week.

P: Yah, once a week, umhm.

M: But I remember her saying that when they were young they got paid every two or three weeks.

P: Hm. That must of been hard to get by on.

M: Yes, and they were three sisters, and they lived in the corporation (P: Umhm) when they grew up see, and they started to work. They lived together in the corporation on Worthen Street. There were three in one room.

P: Oh, what was the corporation, was that um (--)

M: The mill people

P: I see.

M: See, and they had rooms and board.

P: Umhm

M: For the mill people. And she said when they'd get paid, they'd buy a big bag of peanuts, and that would last until they got paid the next time. They'd only take a little every day.

P: Oh, that was a treat for them then.

M: Yes.

P: So after you (--) I'm kind of just jumping around here as I, I think of things. You've finished school then, working in the mill, and then working at night, at school. And then do you want to talk about when you met your husband? Was that shortly after that, or?

M: Oh no, a long time. I graduated from high school I was only seventeen. So I had my mother to take care of.

P: I see

M: I was the only support. She couldn't work anymore. So I, I took over, but at sixteen I started to go out with fellows, but I wasn't allowed to go out nights. I only went out in the afternoon.

P: Oh I see. Were these fellows that you met at church, or at work?

M: Church, yes. (P: Umhm) Yes, and through neighbors. I went out with four or five fellows before I got married.

P: Oh.

M: I got married I was twenty seven.

P: I see

M: Yes

P: What would you do when you'd go out in the afternoon on a date?

M: Just go for a walk. We'd go to the Boulevard. Mother, on Saturday afternoon she'd let me go to the theater, you know with my boyfriend. Not at night. We weren't allowed to go out, my sister and I, just in the afternoon. We'd go to the Merrimack Square, the theater there, and then we'd go sometimes to the opera house if there was a nice play.

P: Oh.

M: On Saturday afternoon.

P: Can you remember any of the plays you saw?

M: Not Sundays, Saturday.

P: The operas or?

M: Oh yes. That Dr. Hyde and Mr. Jeckle.

P: Oh Dr. Jeckle and Mr. Hyde?

M: I saw that yes, in those days.

P: Was that a film or a play?

M: That was a play at the opera house on Central Street then.

P: Umhm

M: And then I use to go to the Merrimack Square to the movies Saturdays afternoon. Sunday's was a square, a sacred day for us. Mother, she was very strict. Well she had to bring us up you know.

P: Right.

M: And then I'd have my friends in (P: Umhm) on Sunday's, and we'd play games.

P: Oh what kind of games would you play?

M: Well we had those games in the box and you spin the clock

P: Oh like a board game

M: Yes, yes.

P: Umhm.

M: And then Parcheesi.

P: Oh yes I know Parcheesi.

M: Yes we played that, (P: Right, right) and we played cards, Old Maid, and all them games. On Sunday's that's what we did.

P: Did you play dolls or ?

M: Yes, oh yes when I was young. Yes.

P: When you were younger.

M: I had a beautiful doll. That was the last gift my father bought me.

P: Oh. And let me see. What ah... did you play jump rope or any type of (--)

M: Yes, out in the back yard. Oh yes.

P: In the back yard when the weather was nice.

M: Yes, after school we were quite a few kids around there you know. And we'd all get in the backyard and jump rope, play hopscotch, and then we'd play that one that you throw the brick, try to hit you know one, two, three, four, five.

P: Oh yes, yup.

M: And if it went outside the line you were out. Oh yes! Oh my.

P: And you say that there were Irish and Greek children but every body got along nicely.

M: Oh fine. Yes, nice families.

P: What was it like working in the mill, when you went to work there?

M: We went to work from 6:00 to 6:00.

P: Hm.

M: That was a long day. Come home, get back to school. That's how I graduated, I got my diploma from high school.

P: Umhm, and then after you (--)

M: Three years I did that.



P: Three years. After you had your diploma did you continue working at the mill?

M: Yes, that's where I got into the woolen mill.

P: I see.

M: No, before that I went to the Cartridge Shop. It was the first World War, the first World War.

P: Umhm

M: And the cartridge shop opened up in South Lowell. So my uncle got me in there at South Lowell. I worked the cartridge shop until the war ended.

P: And that's where they make the bunting that you were talking about?

M: The bunting.

P: Bunting, ah huh.

M: To make the flag. No, no. I was working on the shells, the bullets.

P: Oh.

M: At the cartridge shop for the first World War.

P: Oh!

M: And then when they closed there that's where my aunt got me in the mill.

P: I see.

M: Where we made the bunting for the flags for the flagship.

P: When you made the cartridge what did, did you have to put the powder in it, or how did (--)

M: No I (--) The powder was in it already. All I did was examine it that there wouldn't be any scratch on it. And if there was a little scratch on it I had to throw it away in a box, and keep the good one's.

P: Was it assembly like type of work that you worked?

M: Yes, yes. We had a floor lady and she'd go around and she'd be looking at the one's we dumped, that we threw away, the good ones, to make sure that they were good.

P: Yah, that everything was good. Were these for guns or ?

M: For guns.

P: For guns, umhm

M: Yes, they were about this long, yes. And I made good money there. That's where mother was happy, yah.

P: Yah. And so you did that during the War, during the first World War?

M: During the first World War

P: Yah, and then after that you went to work in the (--)

M: The Bunting.

P: In the Bunting. And what did you do there in the bunting mill?

M: Weaving

P: That's where you did the weaving.

M: I had four looms, yard wide the bunting was (P: umhm) you know, for flags. And (clears throat) then the second World War came.

**Side A ends**

**Side B begins**

P: You married between the first World War and the second World War?

M: No, I was married in 25. That was after the second World War.

P: Ah huh.

M: Yah, was it? No, no.

P: Between the wars.

M: 1925 I was married. (P: Umhm) Yes.

P: And you met your husband.

M: He lived next door.

P: Ah.

M: He lived next door.

P: Now you weren't on Cross Street anymore then?

M: No, no we were on Moody Street.

P: On Moody.

M: Oh, we went three places since Cross Street. We went to Mammoth Road. From Mammoth Road, that's where I worked at the Cartridge Shop on Mammoth Road, when we lived there. And then we lived up at the corner of Pawtucket and School Street for eight years. And then mother got sick, and she had to go to the hospital, and I got a new place on Moody Street. And that's where I was married, from Moody Street.

P: Oh I see. Ah huh.

M: And I lived with mother five years after I was married.

P: Ah.

M: My third baby came and it was time for me to get out. She lived on the third floor and it was hard for the carriage.

P: Oh yes, yes.

M: Up and down, you know. So we moved to Mammoth Road. We lived there nine years. Then I lived one year on Riverside Street, and we brought this place.

P: And how long have you been here?

M: Forty-six years.

P: Forty-six years.

M: My husband died 3 1/2 years ago.

P: Oh I see. So how many children did you have here?

M: Six girls.

P: Six girls. (M: Yes) And how many were born here?

M: Oh here, none were born here.

P: No, none were born here.

M: The baby was two years old when we moved here.

P: I see.

M: She's forty-eight. I had 3 born with mother on Moody Street, and three when we moved on Mammoth Road where the Drug Store is there (P: Umhm) in the back.

P: So you say your husband was living next door to you, and then you (--)

M: Four years and never said hello.

P: Oh no, was he shy or were you shy, or (--)

M: No it just happened. He'd be going by and I didn't know him. So in those days you didn't advance yourself, you know, but I'd say hello to his two sisters. I knew the two sisters to say hello.

P: Oh his whole family lived next door?

M: Next door: on the same floor as us (both giggle) the first floor.

P: Now were they French Canadian also?

M: Yes, the mother and father were from Canada

P: Ah huh.

M: And he spoke broken English when I married him, but he picked it up. I was brought up with the Irish.

P: Oh yah. Did your mother encourage you to date French Canadian or?

M: No.

P: She didn't (--)

M: No, she didn't mind. No, no. And my sister either, but my sister married a French Canadian. He was born in Canada. But see she moved to Springfield. She married a Springfield fellow. And she was only twenty-one when she got married.

P: Oh. I see. Well how did it (--) You say for four years your future husband didn't talk to you. Then how did you break the ice or (--)

M: He went to work in New York. He was a (labber), he was in construction. There was no work here. So his uncle sent for him in New York. And while he was in New York he was lonesome. So his sister, it was an awful day this day. I was on my porch

and his sister was on her porch. And she says to me, “could I came over I'm scared of the thunder?”

P: Oh.

M: So I told her to come up. So to entertain her I thought I'd show her, I use to embroider a lot, (P: Umhm) and I had a hope chest you know, and was all full of towels and pillow cases, sheets, everything was embroidered, you know.

P: Oh yes!

M: And oh she thought that was nice. So she said to me, she says, “My brother's in New York and he's so lonesome.” She says, “Would you write to him?” Well I says, “What do you want me to say to him?” And she says, “Well he'd, he'd like to get news you know.” And then she says, “Maybe he wouldn't be so lonesome.” So I wrote him a few lines.

P: Did you think he was kind of cute from seeing him on the street?

M: Yes, I liked him and his brother too.

P: Umhm.

M: They were two nice boys, but I never thought. [Laughs] So I wrote him a few lines, and first thing I know I got a letter. I still have my letter.

P: Oh, (giggle) so he wrote right back to you?

M: He wrote right back to me and the next day he was home. [Both laughing]

P: Well he must of kind of had his eye on you then too.

M: He must have, yes. [Laughs]

P: When he wrote to you did he write in French or in?

M: English

P: In English, ah huh.

M: Yes, in English.

P: I didn't ask you if you, did your mother speak English or did you speak French?

M: English.

P: You didn't (--)

M: My father didn't speak French.

P: Oh.

M: He was born in Alexander, New York. And that family the (Brows ?), they didn't speak French.

P: Oh, so only English was spoken at home.

M: Yes.

P: Yah. So then your future husband came home the next day and then did you start courting then?

M: He asked me to go to the theater. Mother wouldn't let me go on the first date.

P: Oh.

M: Let him stay. And I had a Victrola in those days. We had the Victrola with the records you know, and we played records.

P: All right, yes. So what kind of music did you have when you, what kind of records did you like to play?

M: Oh..

P: Do you remember the music or (--)

M: Yes, I had a lot of this Irish tenor. Ah, what was his name now?

P: Well the only one I can think of is Caruso.

M: Oh Caruso. I have his, yes.

P: Umhm.

M: I still have him in the closet upstairs, but I gave my record player to my daughter when she was first married to entertain her children, you know.

P: Oh yah. Yah.

M: All the old songs yes, I had all those records. So that's how we spent our Sunday nights. But we'd go to the show on Saturdays.

P: Umhm.

M: Still at that age, you see mother (--)

P: You were in your twenties then?

M: Yes.

P: Yah

M: And we'd go to the show on Saturday, and Sundays we'd play the records. And I went out just one year with him.

P: And then you were married.

M: Married, yah.

P: But came to live with your mother?

M: I stayed there.

P: And you stayed there.

M: Five years, and I had my third baby. She was three months old and we moved to Mammoth Road. And I had three more there. And then Mr. Laporte wanted to build his drug store. So we had to move out. He was taking down that house, but when they came to take it down, they couldn't knock it down, it was all pegged

P: Oh dear.

M: It was over a hundred and fifty years old.

P: Oh.

M: So they moved it back, and he built his drug store in the front. He's right on Mammoth Road.

P: Oh yes, ah huh.

M: So I was brought up with Phil. Phil was like a brother to me. He lived upstairs and we lived downstairs on Cross Street.

P: I see, ah huh. Let me see. Did you have your children at home? Where they born at home too?

M: The three first one's I had in the hospital, and the three last ones at home.

P: Oh, umhm.

M: That was the depression my dear.

P: Oh yes, that's why you had them at home.

M: It use to cost a hundred dollars for two weeks (giggles). Imagine that.

P: Yes, yes. I was going to ask you about what it was like through the depression, living through the depression?

M: It was hard, because my husband was in construction. So there was no construction for eight years.

P: There was no work. Right, right.

M: So he went door to door. So he'd buy his coffee and tea by the bail, go to Boston and have it shipped, tea and coffee.

P: Umhm

M: And we'd put it in the bags, and he'd go door to door selling tea and coffee.

P: Selling it, yah. And that's how you lived then. Were the (--).

M: And then he went in the insurance. He worked in the John Hancock for three years. And from there he went to another insurance company, just selling, not collecting.

P: Umhm.

M: Just selling. And then the work picked up again, his trade. So he went back to his trade. And the last years, the last twenty-five years he worked for Mr. Sherman,. a big contractor in New York.

P: Umhm.

M: So he traveled a lot you know.

P: I see.

M: He'd be home every Friday night. He'd leave Sunday morning. He built all over the country.

P: Oh my, that must of been lonely for you having him gone all week



M: Yes.

P: And so you raised your girls yourself just about.

M: Yes, for twenty years he traveled like that.

P: Um (--).

M: He built that one on the Common, that housing on the North Common.

P: Umhm.

M: I don't know if you know about that one.

P: Yes, yah.

M: He's been there. And then the one they're having a lot of trouble on Gorham Street, Shaughnessy Terrace there, (P: Umhm) my husband built all that from this contractor from New York.

P: For the contractor in New York, yes.

M: Sherman

P: Yah.

P: What was (--). So you've lived here for forty-six years.

M: Yes.

P: What was it like raising your daughters here?

M: Fine, because they went to the school here. Saint Jeanne D'Arc, the next street. Next street the school was there,

P: Wonderful, yes. Yah.

M: So they went to St. Jeanne D'Arc School. From St Jeanne D'Arc School, every year they graduated. One graduated from here, the other one (--)

P: I was going to ask you the age of the (--). How close are they in age?

M: I had five in six years, the five first ones.

P: Oh my.

M: She wasn't six years old, my oldest one, she'd been six the twenty six, and my fifth was born the 6th of March. So I had five in six years.

P: Oh, you were busy.

M: Yes.

P: Did you have anyone to help you, or you did all the (--)

M: No mame. (P: All of the) Baking and all, yes.

P: All the work yourself.

M: And they all graduated from here, and they all graduated from Keith Hall. They all went to Keith Hall, private high school.

P: Oh I see. Is that a parochial high school, or?

M: It was Sisters of Saint Joseph's.

P: Umhm, and what is your ah, your girls doing today? Are they all still here in Lowell too?

M: They're all married. I have one in, [thinking] my goodness, Westford. [Laughs] She's in Westford, and one in Londonderry, New Hampshire. (P: Umhm) The baby, she's in Londonderry.

P: And the other four are here in Lowell?

M: Yes, yes. I have one right up the street here, on my street.

P: I was going to ask you if you lived alone, or if you have anyone living with you here?

M: No.

P: No.

M: My daughter lived up the hill here. She's got a son that's a doctor. And my other daughter lives, I don't know if you know, Woodward and Brookside. Where about's do you live?

P: I live in Chelmsford

M: Oh your living in Chelmsford.

P: Yah, yah.

M: Well my daughter lives in Westford.

P: Umhm.

M: And next to the last. I have two right near me, and I have two up in the Highlands. My fourth and my oldest, they're up in the Highlands.

P: And how many grandchildren?

M: Twenty one.

P: Oh my. Oh I see all the pictures.

M: Yah, I have a gallery and eleven great grand children.

P: Oh that's wonderful.

M: All boys but one.

P: Oh your kidding

M: Yes, that last one. My husband wanted a boy so bad. It was four years between my fifth and my sixth. And when she was born Dolores, he wouldn't go to work before she was born, he had, he was so sure it was going to be a boy. And when he run up the stairs, and the doctor says sorry, another girl, he turned around. He didn't even go look at the baby, he turned around. And my brother-in-law said he cried all day.

P: Awe [laughs]. Well I'm sure your proud of your six girls.

M: I am.

P: Yah.

M: I don't think I'd be living if I didn't have those six girls.

P: Six girls.

M: They're so good to me.

P: Yah.

M: They come each their turn during the week.

P: Oh that's wonderful. When you, did you have (--) You said you had your last three at home, the doctor came to the house then?

M: Yes, I had the same doctor.

P: Umhm.

M: Dr. King.

P: Did they give you (--)

M: Leo King at the school, the University.

P: Oh

M: He's the Dean of, the children that go into school. (P: Hm, ah huh) He's the dean there, Leo King. That's his father who was the doctor.

P: Oh I see. When the doctor would come would they give you any anesthesia? Were you awake when the children were born? Do you remember?

M: Oh they'd give you at the last moment they'd give you (--)

P: A mask of something like ether or?.

M: Ether, yah.

P: Yah, yah.

[Tape is turned off, then on again]

P: Okay. Now I asked Madeline if she worked after she was married.

M: I worked 14 months at the parachute. 14 months, and that's all I worked in my married life.

P: In your married life, yes.

M: I was (--)

P: Was the parachute factory at one of the mills?

M: Right down here over the bridge. When you go down Pawtucket Street, all those mills there. That was just for the war.

P: For the war effort. (M: Yes.) Ah huh. Can you remember the flood that they had here in '36 ?

M: '38?

P: '38, yah.

M: I was living there on Mammoth Road, and the water stopped right in front of our house.

P: Did you have to evacuate, or move any of your things up, or (--)

M: Oh daddy and I yes, we moved everything upstairs that we could. The stove we had to leave it, but the chairs and the tables in the kitchen, he took it apart and we moved everything upstairs. But in back, the next street to us, it come down like oh, falls. It was like the falls.

P: Um.

M: And we were so scared. But God was good, it stop right at our front door.

P: Right at your front door. And you had your little children then at home, right?

M: Yes, six of them.

P: Right, right.

M: Yah, but we had them three up to my mothers house, and three up to my in-laws.

P: They lived in higher ground then?

M: Yes, they were way up on the hill on Mt. Washington Street, and and mother was on Moody Street.

P: Umhm.

M: And it didn't go there see.

P: Yah. What about the hurricane that came through? Do you remember that? They talked about a bad hurricane in late 30's. Ah, maybe it was more in Boston then out this way?

M: I don't remember that, but I remember the when we had that one in '38 I think it was, this one

P: The flood

M: Yah. We'd go, we'd walk down to the corner, my dad, my husband and I, and we'd see the horses and cows all coming down from New Hampshire.

P: Um, yes.

M: The falls in Pawtucketville. But the other, oh I know what you mean, the flood, it didn't come here, it was in the Rosemont.

P: Um.

M: And that's where they built the big dike, yes

P: Right yah, yah.

M: I remember that, the water

P: Ah huh. Can you (--) What did downtown Lowell look like say when you were a young girl growing up?

M: The same as today, the only thing they're improving it now, they making it look nice. Yah, we had Pollard's then. Pollard's is gone, but there was, we had a nice downtown, yah.

P: And they had the trolley car then that ran the, the (--)

M: Yes, and the buses.

P: And the bus, umhm.

M: In the winter yah. Yes.

P: Did you ever go into Boston at all, or?

M: I went in a few times with my daughters when they grew up, and then when they got married they'd go on to go to Filene's and they'd take me with them.

P: Oh yah. How would you go in then on the (--)

M: With their car. They drove. They all drove, the girls.

P: Ah huh.

M: Yah, they all drove, all but her up the hill. She never wanted to learn.

P: To drive, yah. Well do you remember the first car you had, did you and your husband have a car?

M: Oh we had cars when we got married.

P: Oh, (M: Yes) umhm.

M: Yes, yes, because he had to work out of town a lot, Lawrence and all these places. So.

P: Do you remember the car, or what kind of car he had?

M: Yes, he had a Essex. Our first car was an Essex, yah. Second car was a brand new Essex and then we got a Dodge. And then during the depression we sold it. We couldn't swing it.

P: Yah, yah.

M: So he walked with his suitcase selling tea and coffee. (P: Oh my) He was so good.

P: Yah.

M: He said, "Put something on the table anyhow."

P: Did (--)

M: Never went to the city.

P: Never went.

M: Never went for help.

P: Um, I was going (stuttering), I talked to somebody else and they said the grocer's would let you ah,

M: Oh yes

P: Keep something on the cuff and then pay when you could.

M: Yes, yah. Yes we had that. We had a good grocer Mr. Parent.

P: I heard about, oh there was a French Canadian man that sold baked beans or had some good beans around here.

M: Cote's

P: Was that it?

M: Yes, on Salem Street.

P: Hm

M: Yes, I bake my own.

P: Oh you made your own beans?

M: Ah huh.

P: What about another thing I was wondering about, what about the crime? Was there much crime in the (--)

M: No. We never heard of that. No.

P: Nothing like today. Nothing like you hear about today. It was (--)

M: The Greek's, and the Irish, and the French, we got along. Oh the boys of course they'd have fights, you know, like, but we never heard of what they have today. Six o'clock I lock my doors, I'm afraid.

P: Yah, yah,

M: Still it's pretty nice around here last night. I feel awful, because since my husband died I locked the door (P: Oh yah) on Halloween.

P: Yah, right.

M: I'm afraid. Because I use to like to give them a candy and apples. So last night there was a lot of noise. There must of been a lot out.

P: Yah, well it was a warm night.

M: The church generally gave them a party, but I don't think they had one last night, because everybody's lights were on.

P: Did they have Halloween when you were a little girl?

M: Yes.

P: Did they.

M: But we used to do pranks.

P: Oh trick or treat?

M: No, we didn't have that in my day.

P: Oh you didn't have trick or treat?



M: No, no, we played tricks on the people. We'd take a little spool of thread, an empty spool of thread and we'd make notches all around. And you'd put a pencil in it, and put a lot of twine, and you'd go in the window and you'd go [makes sound]. [Both laugh]

P: Oh no! Was this just on Halloween?

M: Halloween, yah.

P: So you wouldn't come to the door and ask for candy, you just did tricks?

M: No, no, we didn't ask for candy and our day, no. We just were pranksters.

P: Yup.

M: Or they'd take the gates off one house and they'd bring it to the other house, and take that gate, and bring it back. The boys would do that.

P: And bring it back, yah, yah. What about Christmas and New Years? Did you have (-- ) Was Christmas a big holiday when (M: Oh yes) you were growing up too?

M: My mom did what she could for us, yah.

P: Would you have a Christmas tree or?

M: The last years I remember we had two little trees, but outside of that we didn't, but she had branches. And she'd take her ironing board, and she'd put it on the sewing machine, and she had a red table cloth, and she'd put it on top of that, and then she'd put our gifts there, my sister and I.

P: What were some of the gifts that you got?

M: Oh dolls, and my sister wanted a sled and she got a nice big sled. And whatever we wanted, a few toys, not too many.

P: Was there any special celebration on Christmas Day? Did you visit with your relatives?

M: My aunts would come over to our house.

P: Umhm.

M: Her two sisters, they'd come over, and my aunt Emma with my uncle, and we'd have Christmas dinner, but they wouldn't bring their children. But new years, there, my aunts would have had the dinner over to their house.

P: Oh, so they would take turns then.

M: Yes, yes

P: Ah huh.

P: What would (--) Did you have any special food at Christmas time, or at New Years?

M: Oh my mother would always have a nice big chicken

P: Yah, ah huh.

M: Yes, a big chicken.

P: And what about new years? Any special celebration for New Year's Eve, (M: No) or special food or (--)

M: No.

P: Nothing ah, nothing special like (--)

M: Well she used to make pork pies, that was a French way.

P: Is that a French Custom for New Years?

M: Yes, yes, she'd make the pork pies. And I kept that up after I was married.

P: Oh now what is a pork pie, is it like a (--)

M: We make it with pork. You buy pork and you have it "hamburg", like hamburg you know.

P: Umhm

M: And then you put your spices in it, and your onions and you cook it, and then you put it into your pie shell and you make pork pies.

P: Oh.

M: Oh my god yes. I make up to seven or eight pies.

P: Oh my, now (--)

M: I had the whole family.

P: Was that considered good luck that you had pork pies on New Years?

M: No, its a French custom.

P: Just a French custom.

M: Yes.

P: Umhm. Any other special food that you ate around that time or (--)

M: Yes, mother'd make a pudding, plum pudding. And she'd p the sauce on it, you know. And what else would she make? [Thinking]

P: What about Easter? Were they any special foods for Easter?

M: Easter was ham and eggs.

P: Ham and eggs, umhm.

M: Yes, we had ham and eggs.

P: Would you decorate Easter Eggs?

M: Yes.

P: Hard boiled eggs?

M: My mother would, yes, yah.

P: So they had that custom when you were growing up?

M: Yes, yes. Yah, and she'd hide them in back of the couch, or for my sister and I to go find you know, or in back of the picture frames. She'd hide them there too, you'd have to find them.

P: Did you think the Easter bunny had hide them? Did they have an Easter bunny?

M: Yes.

P: Yes, yah. What about Santa Claus? Did they, did you believe in Santa Claus or?

M: No, no.

P: At Christmas?

M: I was eight or nine years old, and my sister was so mad at me that she told me there was no Santa Claus. [Both chuckle]

P: So you stopped believing then?

M: Yah.

P: Yah, yah let me see. Can you remember any Fourth of July celebrations here in Lowell, or (Oh yes) what they did for the (--)

M: My husband always bought a big box of fireworks and he'd shoot em off at night. The children would all sit down, and he'd shoot off the fireworks, yes. Where we lived on Mammoth Road there we'd sit. Oh they remember that. (P: Awe) Yes, yah.

P: Did they have any special celebrations in Lowell, like festivals, or parade's or?

M: The one I remember is the Firemen's Muster. The Firemen's, they had a big celebration on the north common. They'd sell corn on the cob, hot dogs. That's the Firemen's Muster.

P: Firemen's.

M: Yes, that was a big celebration. And then we use to have band concerts on Thursday night I think it was, and Saturday night, or Sunday night. Twice a week we'd have band concerts on the common, and all the people would be on the common, yes.

P: This was in the summer, in the warm months?

M: In the summer, yes.

P: Ah huh. And who, what band would play? Was it a local band?

M: The local band, yes.

P: Umhm

M: The City Band they called it, yes.

P: The City Band, yah.

P: And the Firemen's Muster, was that held around 4th of July, or just sometime in the summer?

M: I can't remember now.

P: Yah

M: I can't remember, but it was in the summer. And we lived right there near the north common. And they'd have these boilers there full of corn on the cob, you know, and then

they'd have the hot dogs. I don't remember them having hamburgs though. I think it was mostly hot dogs and corn on the cob.

P: And during the, oh the depression, it was also during probation. Do you know of any bootlegging or anything? Did people make their own and (--)

M: That's when I lived at mother's on Moody Street there, they had a kitchen. They were selling beer in kitchens.

P: Oh, would they make it themselves?

M: Yes, home brew I guess.

P: Home brew, umhm yah. Yah that (--).

M: And they'd sell it. You'd hear the black mariahs every Saturday night, they were pulling them in for selling, yah.

P: Oh the police would come around (M: Yes) and try to pick up the people that had their (M: Yes) own little stills.

M: Yes, yes, yah. They were selling it you know.

P: Oh, oh.

M: They had kitchens, and people would go in have a glass of beer like they do in restaurants today.

P: Oh, oh I see.

M: And on Moody St. there was plenty of them.

P: Yah. Was Moody Street also the red light District? Kind of (--)

M: No, no. I don't think so. I never heard of it being a red light district.

P: Oh, ah huh

M: In Canada though they had the red light district.

P: Oh do they? [Giggle]

M: Yeah, but out here I never heard of it.

P: Um, what were some of the oh, social activities that you did, say (--)

M: Well during the First World War at the C.M.A.C. we had a class there, they was four wealthy women of the parish, they got the yarn, and they asked for parishioners if we'd work for the soldiers. So we went, and they'd give us some yarn, and they'd give us a pattern, and you made sweaters, slip ons for the soldiers, and made anklets there, you know, to put just anklets here.

P: Oh yes, right.

M: Yes, and helmets.

P: Ah, ah huh.

M: I made ninety-one slip ons.

P: Is that right.

M: Yes, at the C.M.A.C.

P: Now what is that? I'm not familiar with that? The C. M. (--)

M: The C.M.A.C.. You know where St. Joseph's Hospital is?

P: Yes.

M: Well right across the street there's a club there. You must have noticed. There's a gray building there (P: Oh right) and there's a big club, yah, and that's where we use to go once a week. And then she'd give us our yarn and we'd bring what we knitted during the week. So mother used to help me. (P: Uh huh) She used to knit during the day when I was working, and I'd knit at night. So I knitted that. That was (hesitating thinking).

P: You said that you had done a lot of things for your hope chest too, a lot of embroidery. What type of, was it like crocheted embroidery or (--)

M: No, no. I embroidered by hand, all, all silk you know.

P: Oh my.

M: And I, I embroidered my christening clothes for the christening. It was a little hood, (P: Awe) you know the little hood and the cape (P: Yes) and the shawl, and the little petticoat, and a little jacket, and the, it was like a square. What do you call it now, you put it on your head?

P: Oh, like a bandana?

M: Yes, a long one there. I embroidered all that.

P: Oh now was this for (--)

M: For my first baby.

P: When your first baby was Christened

M: Yes, and I still have it. And all my grandchildren but two were christened in the dress.

P: In the same outfit. Oh, that's wonderful. How about your wedding? Did you wear a special dress for your wedding?

M: My mother-in-law made my wedding dress and my going away dress.

P: Oh wonderful.

M: It was crepe de sheen and chiffon.

P: Um.

M: My wedding dress was a flush color.

P: Oh.

M: That was (--)

P: The style then.

M: The style then

P: Ah huh.

M: And I had a bridal bonnet, yes.

P: Were you married in the church?

M: And pink slippers and all.

P: Oh my!

M: Yes, I was married at a mass, yes.

P: I see. Did you have any attendants, or anyone that stood up with you?

M: Two fathers, that was the style then. :

P: I see.

M: So I had my brother-in-law stood up for me.

P: Ah huh.

M: And his father stood for him, yah.

P: And where did (--)

M: And it was my cousin the priest that married me.

P: Oh wonderful

M: Yes, my mother's cousin [unclear].

P: Yah, and then where did you go on your honey moon? Did you taken trip anywhere?

M: We went to Boston.

P: Oh..

M: Yes

P: Did you take the train in or ?

M: Yes.

P: Ah huh.

M: We took the train in and we went to see “ No, No Nanette.”

P: Umhm.

M: That was a nice show there. And the “Can-Cnn Girls” I think it was. Yah. We took in three shows while we were in Boston.

P: Well how long were you there?

M: Four days

P: Four days, and then where did you spend the night, in a hotel or (--)

M: Copley Plaza (P: Oh) if you please.



P: Oh my goodness you went first class.

M: You bet, seven dollars a night.

P: Oh that's (--)

M: You wouldn't get that today, huh!

P: No. [Laughing]

M: Oh yes, yes, we had a beautiful room there, yah. And every morning about 9:00 we'd take off and we'd go and have lunch. And then we'd go around and we'd see different buildings you know, walk around. And when it was about 1:00 we'd have our dinner, and we went in nice restaurants.

P: Umhm.

M: No, he didn't spare nothing,

P: Yah.

M: Yah. we had nice (--) And then we'd buy a bag of fruit, and go back in our room. And we'd have some fruit, and then we'd take off for the shows at night.

P: Oh wonderful

M: Yah, we had a nice honeymoon. And we come home Friday because his folks were giving us a reception. [Unclear].

P: I was going to ask you, right. So you had your reception a couple days after you were married?

M: Yah.

P: Now was that held in there home, or ah (--)

M: In there home, yah, next door to us.

P: Yah.

M: Yah. We were married Monday morning. It was a Monday morning, September 7th (clear throat) 1925, and we came home Friday afternoon.

P: Was it a nice day, the day you got married?

M: Pouring rain.

P: Oh no!

M: Pouring rain.

P: Well I've heard that's lucky.

M: We had umbrellas.

P: Yah, I've heard that's (--)

**Tape I, side B ends.**

**Tape II, side A begins**

P: ... Madeline Bergeron at 65 Endicott Street on November 1, 1985, and this is Pat Coble. Now you had been (--) I think we were cut off when you were explaining your wedding bouquet. You said you had lovely (--)

M: Two dozen of white roses. It was bigger than myself.

P: Awe.

M: Yes, I had a big bouquet. It was pouring rain, but mother gave us, she had it catered, the breakfast, with the two families.

P: Umhm

M: Because in a tenement you know.

P: Yah, now were you.....(interrupted)

M: And in the afternoon my relatives all came for the reception before we left.

P: For the reception. So this was at your home.

M: At my home, my mother's home.

P: At your mother's home umhm. And then you took the train into Boston.

M: Boston

P: Spent four days, and then when you came back your in-laws had a little

M: Reception.

P: Reception for you. Did you get a lot of gifts? Was that the (--)

M: Oh yes, yes!

P: The custom, umhm

M: Blankets, and we got those console sets, we had five of them. The bowl and the 2 candle sticks that was the style in those days

P: Yup, yup.

M: And glasses and towels. We got lovely gifts. They lasted me a long time. I didn't buy any sheets for ten years.

P: Is that right, you got enough for your (--)

M: Yes, and what I had in my hope chest besides, you know. I had (--)

P: Did you have your own furniture because you lived with your mother, or did you (--)

M: No

P: You used her things.

M: Yes.

P: And then waited and brought your own.

M: Yes, yes, it was her home. And when I left she gave me the brass bed that we had in our room (P: Ah huh) She gave me that, and the two bureaus. (P: Ya) And we gave that to the children. And we bought a new bedroom set when we moved.

P: When you moved over.

M: On Mammoth Road.

P: Ah huh. Did your mother, since you both were home, would she help you with the children? Was she (--)

M: Oh my, yes. Oh yes, she loved them.

P: Her health wasn't that bad that she couldn't help you?

M: No, no.

P: Ah huh.

M: Well she lived, (clears throat) she lived by herself for years there, and then when she got 80 years old my husband went see her one afternoon, and she wasn't feeling good. And he come home and he says "Mad" he says, "your mother don't feel good." He says, "We should take her in." So the following Tuesday he went up, and he told her, he says, "You're going to come and stay with us."

P: How did was she then? She must (--)

M: Eighty.

P: Eighty, yah.

M: She died at 95.

P: Umhm. So she was with you for fifteen years then. Well you lived with her (--)

M: Great help till she went blind.

P: Oh.

M: She went blind about six years before she died.

P: Ah huh.

M: But she'd boned, if I had turkey you know she'd bone the turkey, bone the ham, and she'd set the table, she'd wash the dishes.

P: Yah.

M: Yes, oh yes, she was a great help. And I'd let her iron the straight pieces so she'd stay up on her feet, you know.

P: Oh yes, yah.

M: And she'd iron for one hour about, all the straight pieces.

P: Yah.

M: In those days you had to iron everything you know.

P: Right, right. [Both giggle]

P: Um, was that the custom to take your parents in with you as they got older, (M: No) or were you the (--)

M: No, no, it wasn't the custom, but you feel as though you, you should (--) When you're, she was on the third floor there.

P: Oh yes, yah, right.

M: And it was hard for her to get around, to go to the store downstairs.

P: Umhm.

M: And she was always getting sick. So he happened to go that day. God must have sent him there, and she was very sick. So he came home and he says "Mad" he says, "Your mother's very sick."

P: Take her in, right.

M: Yah. So we did. She got rid of all her furniture. All (--) I let her bring her bedroom set so she'd feel at home, (P: Yes) and she had her sewing machine in her room. She made quilts for all the girls, every one of them. There were six of them. And then for Father's Day she made one for my husband.

P: Oh. [Giggles]

M: She loved to make quilts,

P: Yah.

M: And she would crochet. She loved to crochet.

P: Umhm.

M: Yah, she'd crochet. She'd make those little dolls for curtain pulls there. You know those little dolls you buy in the 5+10, she'd make little skirts for them and she'd make curtain pulls.

P: Yah.

M: She kept busy.

P: Oh that's, that's good.

M: And then she got blind. She had cataracts, and the doctor wouldn't operate. She was to old.

P: Oh yah.

M: See in those days they wouldn't operate. Today they would.

P: Yah, yah. You said you didn't smoke, or drink, but you remember your grandmother smoking?

M: My, not my grandmother, my grand aunt.

P: Oh your great aunt?

M: Yes, yes. I remember when my uncle Charlie died she was smoking the pipe, and I was so surprised to see her smoking the pipe.

P: Was it a corn cob?

M: Corn cob.

P: Corn cob.

M: Corn cob pipe. She died at 102.

P: Oh my, you are, you come from a long lived family.

M: My mother's aunt, yah.

P: You said that, here in the notes, that there were a lot of famous people that grew up on your street? (M: Yes) Umhm. Do you want to tell me about some of them?

M: Mayors and doctors. Right across the street was Dr. Donovan, and the Greek Dr. Gatzopoulos. I don't know if he's still living. Dr. Donovan is gone. And Dr. Leary lived right next door to us. And then we had Mayor O'Donnell and Mayor Donovan, they were all Cross Street.

P: Umhm.

M: Yes.

P: Well that must of been a pretty famous area then (M: Yes, yes) where all of the (--)

M: The acre, yes! Oh of course you ain't from out here. Yes, the acre's very popular in those days. And the Donovan's they owned a big meat Market on Market Street, the father and mother, they lived across the street from us.

P: Is that where you brought most of your meat, your mother would buy her meat?

M: No, she'd go to Keefe's on Broadway. They're right near our house. Market Street was further down. Market Street was where the Greeks were. That was known as the Greek territory.

P: Oh I see.

M: Yes.

P: Ah huh.

M: Yah, and Mr. Donovan had his Market there. Yup. My mother walked from Cross Street, downtown up John Street to the Boott Mills to go to work.

P: About how far was that? A mile or two?

M: A mile and a half .

P: Mile and a half.

M: In all the storms.

P: Hm. Do you think the weather was harsher then?

M: Yes, much.

P: Yah.

M: Oh yes. I think so.

P: More snow and colder weather?

M: We'd have snow like that and we'd have to go to school us. There was no bells telling you you couldn't go to school,

P: Hm

M: And we'd go to the Common, a bunch of us you know, and we'd all lay down and make our picture in the snow. [Laughs]

P: Oh, like angels, making angels in the snow? Did you, you were high top shoes. Did you have to wear boots or anything, or (--)

M: No, we had leggings. The leggings they'd come to here and it was all buttons all the way down. [Laughs]

P: And it covered the top of your shoe then too?

M: Yes, oh yes, down to our feet. They had a strap underneath that went under your shoe, and then you had your overshoe over that.

P: Yah, would it keep you warm?

M: Oh yes. Yes.

P: And dry, yah.

M: And scarfs. My folks would knit the scarfs for us, you know.

P: Umhm, and mittens?

M: And tamoshanters.

P: Yah, yah.

M: They called it in those days. The tamoshanters. Oh yah, you'd see your nose that's all. (Both giggle)

P: Was it cold in your apartment then too

M: Huh?

P: It was cold in your house I guess.

M: Well mother would close up the front rooms. Mother would only have the kitchen and the two bedrooms.

P: I see.

M: And Sunday's we'd open up the parlor.

P: Umhm.

M: And then of course she bought a piano for my sister and I.

P: Oh, did you play the piano?

M: And we started taking lessons yes, yes.

P: Oh, did someone come to the house to give you lessons?

M: Yes, professor Hopkin's and a cousin of my mother's. (Background you can hear children outside) They're both dead today. Frappier, she taught me first. And then I had Professor Hopkin's, she was the organist in the Congregational Church on Merrimack Street.



P: Did you continue playing the piano as you got older, or just something you did as a child, or when you were grown up?

M: Until I was eighteen.

P: Umhm

M: And then I didn't want to take anymore lessons. I just played popular music that's all, for singing.

P: What did the parlor look like? Was it modern?

M: Mother had a beautiful set. Different color, every chair was a different color. The rocker was rose, and the straight chair was kind of a greenish yellow, all silk. Yah, that was covered up during the week. We took the covers off Sundays. And the couch was red, and I think the little chair was green. My children still remember it.

P: Do they really?

M: Yes.

P: What kind of lamps did you have? Gas lamps or?

M: Electric

P: Electric.

M: We had electric

P: Ah huh.

M: Oh yah. We had gas on Cross Street at first, and then they put in the electric. We use to have those mantels, the gas mantels.

P: Right.

M: Yes. Oh you couldn't blow on them. Yes, we had gas first, and then when they put in the electric, mother got a nice table lamp.

P: Was the table in the middle of the floor, or ?

M: No, it was up against the wall.

P: Up against the wall.

M: And the piano was there. And then next was the cabinet for my music, and the straight chair. Then was the couch. And in the bay window she had the rocker, and on this side was the other chair with the arms on it.

P: Did you have curtains at the window?

M: Oh yes, beautiful.

P: You remember the curtains?

M: My mother had beautiful lace curtains on Cross Street. Oh beautiful lace curtains. And then when we moved to Moody Street, that's quite a while afterwards, they were making those, it was the style to buy some cloth, and you cut some threads, and then you worked around. It was all cut work. She made her curtains for there, on Moody Street. Oh they were beautiful. She had the bay window, and then she had that window that went on the porch. Yes, she made them all by hand.

P: Oh my!

P: Ah, what ... did you have rags on the floor in the parlor?

M: She had a square.

P: Umhm

M: We had hardwood floors there on Moody Street, but on Cross Street we had straw.

P: Oh, just straw on the floor?

M: A straw mat

P: Oh, straw mats.

M: Yah, it went all around. The dust, oh those were terrible.

P: Oh, how would you clean those? Have to roll them up and sweep underneath, or (--)

M: No, mother use to take papers and soak them in water, and she'd throw them all around the room, and under the bed, and then she'd go under with the broom. And that wet paper gathered the dust.

P: Oh, that's a good idea.

M: Oh the straw mats, was a (--) That was the style in those days. The two bedrooms.

P: They didn't have vaccum cleaners.

M: No, no we didn't.

P: So did you eat in the kitchen then?

M: Yes.

P: You didn't have a separate dinning room?

M: No, we didn't. No.

P: Yah. So a lot of the activity went on right in the kitchen?

M: In, up there in the acre, the tenaments we didn't have dinning rooms.

P: Yah.

M: We had bedrooms, parlor and kitchen. [Chuckles]

P: Bedrooms, parlor and kitchen, yah. And then, let me see. What would you keep your dishes in? Didn't they have a special cupboard in the kitchen?

M: Oh we had pantry, the pantry I told you.

P: Oh, yah, uh huh.

M: We had a nice pantry and we had closets there. And we had all our dishes there, silverware, yes. And on Sundays we had a different set than during the week..

P: Oh, different set of dishes?

M: We had the white set on Sunday.

P: Oh, ah huh. So that was more special. (M: Yes) And then were there can goods then, or were all the vegatables prepared?

M: No, there was canned goods too.

P: There were canned goods.

M: But in the summer, my aunt on the farm, she gave us all of the vegetables we wanted..

P: Yah, yah.

M: You know, the fresh vegetables.

P: Did your mother ever have a garden?

M: No.

P: You weren't able, there wasn't enough room in the acre to have gardens.

M: No, no.

P: Ah huh.

M: No, and there were nine tenements. So we didn't have (--) We just had a backyard. It was big enough to play, and we had all the clothes lines. And Monday was my mother's day, the second was another day, and the front was another day.

P: Oh. I see.

M: For the clotheslines.

P: So you took turns using the same lines. (M: Yes) And it worked out all right? Everyone got along well? (M: Oh yes. Oh yes) And there was no (--)

M: And if somebody wanted to change, they'd exchanged you know, days, yah.

P: Did any huxters come around selling vegetables too?

M: Bananas, bananas, the banana man. Just bananas, and the rag man. [Laughs]

P: Oh, what would the rag man?

M: "Any rags, any rags?" [Laughs]

P: Oh, so then he was like the trash man or the garbage man? He would take the (--)

M: No, no he just picked up rags and your old rubbers that were torn, or your overshoes. He weighed them, and he'd give you a cent a pound, or 2 cents a pound for your rags.

P: Oh, so he would pay you for the rags.

M: Yes, yes. So they'd holler "rags, any rags."

P: Oh. What about your garbage, or (--)

M: There was a city man use to come around for the garbage.

P: Ah huh.

M: That was down cellar. We had to go down cellar, and you'd put it in that. And boy when he'd go out the door you'd slam your door, the smell.

P: Oh, they wouldn't come that often then I guess.

M: Once a week.

P: Oh, once a week, but with nine families.

M: Oh, it was terrible. Well we each had a bucket. There was three buckets in our place, and three in the other.

P: Umhm.

M: Yah, we had three buckets. He had to go to each door, but oh the smell was awful. It's a wonder we're healthy.

P: You had a porch on your tenement? You said (--) Oh, no porch?

M: No porch. Upstairs they did, but not downstairs.

P: Oh, you were on the first floor.

M: We were on the first floor.

P: I see.

M: We use to sit on the steps. [Giggles]

P: Was it somebody's job to keep the step clean, the person that lived on the first floor or?

M: We did. Yes. Yah, mother did. And they, Mrs. Laporte and Mrs. Richards, they used to wash their stairs every week you know, keep them clean.

P: So all of the women were pretty good housekeepers it sounds like?

M: They were clean in those days. And we didn't have what they have today. It was hard. My mother's floor was as white as snow.

P: Did they have any pets, did people have dogs or cats for pets?

M: They could have cats in our block but, no dogs.

P: No dogs

M: No dogs.

P: Did you have any cats?

M: No no.

P: Did people have birds like canaries, or any pet birds?

M: The doctor across the street, and Dr. Donovan they had birds, little yellow canaries. Yah they had birds.

P: Umhm

M: They'd be peeping all day, yah.

P: And you've said you weren't aware of any tension in the neighborhood, or any (--)

M: No no.

P: Everybody (--)

M: Everybody got along, yah.

P: Got along, the parents and the (--)

M: And the people, the fathers worked you know. And we knew what time it was to get in the house. You know that (--)

P: You didn't have to lock your doors at night then?

M: No. Times have changed.

P: So it was really a good place to live?

M: Yes, yes.

P: Happy.

M: I was nineteen, almost twenty when we moved away. We moved to Mammoth Road (clears throat) near the fire house.

P: Umhm.

M: That white house there. We moved there, and we stayed there five years. And then, well my sister was married then. My sister got married on Cross Street.

P: Umhm

M: When we lived in the block.

P: I had heard that in some groups usually the, oh well your sister was oldest one.

M: She's the oldest, yes.

P: The older sister had to get married first, and then the younger one, but that (--)

M: Well it just happened that way. Yes, yes.

P: It just worked out that way in your family.

M: Yah.

P: Do you remember going to the doctors, or if you were sick would the doctor come to the house or (--)

M: Oh, when I was ten years old I almost went blind. I had abcess in my eyes, abcess.

P: Ooh, ah huh.

M: Yes. And my mother would take me to the emergency hospital. She was working in the Boott, and she had a pass to go to this emergency hospital, (P: Umhm) because she didn't have the money to pay the other people, a doctor. So we went there in the emergency. And after a week you couldn't see my eyes anymore. The powder he was putting in my eyes. (P: Oh my!) I don't know if you should put that down, about my eyes.

P: Oh.

M: Then she took me to Doctor Meigs, and he (--)

P: He cleared it up.

M: He cleared it right up, but I had to stay in the bedroom for three months with a comforter in the window so there wouldn't be no light at all. And she'd bring me my meals in the room, for three months.

M: And she'd bring me my meals in the room.

P: Yah.

M: For three months. Then when I went back to school they gave me green glasses. I had green glasses, and the nun had put the drops in my eyes.

P: Ah huh. Oh for goodness sakes. What caused the abcess? Did they ever know?

M: No, Dr. Meigs was the one that cured me.

P: That cured you, but, but you have your vision today.

M: Oh yes, yah. Yah, and I'm 80, I'll be 89 next may and I have good eyesight. I read a lot.

P: Ah huh.

M: Yah, yah. I love to read.

P: Ah, do you remember getting chicken pox,,or measels, or mumps? Did they have those (--)

M: Oh yes, chicken pox. Chicken pox, and not the mumps. I didn't have the mumps, but I had chicken pox and I was left with a little mark here, yah. I had that when I went to Cross Street School. So I must have been before eight years old when I had that.

P: Umhm. What about measels? Did they have (--)

M: I don't remember that.

P: You don't remember measels.

M: No, and only one of my children had scarlet fever.

P: Oh my. Ah huh.

M: Yah, my third one. She had scarlet fever her. The others never got it, because Pa took them to his folks, and my mother took them so I could take care of her.

P: Yes.

M: Because in those days they put a card on your door.

P: Right, right.

M: Contagious.

P: Yah

M: And I took care of her, and after that she got a mastoid, and because she had had scarlet fever.



P: Oh yes!

M: They said that it was contagious

P: Umhm

M: So they took her to the hospital, TBHospital where it's all contagious disease, (P: Umhm) and the doctor operated on her there. I almost lost her.

P: Oh dear, but she's fine today?

M: Yes, she lives up the hill here.

P: Oh, she's the one that lives up the hill, ah huh.

M: And she's got a son a doctor. And I have a son that's studying for the priesthood. He'll be ordained a deacon in May, next May.

P: Oh wonderful!

M: Yes. And then my little one here, he's studying at Merrimack, I hope. He's going to study to be a lawyer.

P: Oh wonderful. We'll you have all professions.

M: Yah, a real estate lawyer.

P: Yes, you have all professions. That's wonderful.

M: Yah, I have a nice family.

P: What were some of the things your daughters did? What were (--) Did they (--) What were some of the careers they pursued?

M: Lorriane here, after her children were in school she went to work for Dr. Sweeney, Dr. Tom Sweeney. And I think she worked for him eleven years, and now she's home (P: Umhm) and he's retired. And my oldest girl worked in the bank. She worked in the bank when she graduated from Keith when she was home. So after her family all got in school, she thought she'd go to work. And she, I think she worked about 10-12 years at the Union National Bank. My Gloria worked at the St. Joesph's Hospital for eleven years there after her family got in school. And she worked at the V.A. for five years. The V.A., (P: Umhm, umhm) you know, the square.

M: Now the fourth one Connie, she's been taken care of Mrs. Clark. She's a companion to Mrs. Clark for 11 years. She's the one that's got the 2 boys there. One's studying to be

a priest, and the other one's in college. And then that's the fifth one, and the last one, she's got four, three girls and a boy. Her boy works in Denver Colorado.

P: Ooh!

M: He's out there. He's putting up, you know the glass tops on the houses there?

P: Umhm.

M: What do you call that?

P: Oh, for solar heat?

M: Yes, that's what he does out there. That's popular out there.

P: Oh yes, yah.

M: He's in Colorado. He's 26. And her daughter, she's living in Manchester she was in Colorado five years, but she's living in Manchester now. She's come home because she had a baby and she came home. She wanted to be home.

P: Oh that's nice.

M: So that one, she's still got two daughters at home. That's the baby. I have twenty-one grandchildren, and they're all doing good. I have eleven married, and they all own their own home but two.

P: Isn't that wonderful.

M: Yes, they followed the father and mother's footsteps, yes. (P: Uh huh) My husband believed in that you know. He didn't believe in paying rent. And he'd say to them, "Pay rent now, or a few years, and when your first baby comes buy your home. And they all did.

P: They all followed his advice. Yes. Well this was the home you own for forty-six years.

M: Forty-six years, yes. My baby was two years old when I moved here.

P: Oh dear.

M: She's forty-eight now. My oldest is fifty-eight, and I'm 88. [Laughs]

P: And your 88. So that (--) You would of have been 30 when your first one was born?

M: Yes, almost. She was born in March and I was 30 in May.

P: In May. And you said you were 27 when you got married.

M: Married, yes.

P: Talking about your mother when you were growing up, did your mother do any canning or (--)

M: Oh God yes!

P: Did they do a lot of canning then?

M: Yes.

P: Uh huh.

M: And I did too. Oh I canned plenty, piccalilli. My husband would go and buy crates of strawberry. He'd buy bags of corn. "What do you want me to do with this?" "Corn again?" "Can them." [P: Laughs] We'd go on the farm (P: umhm) and he'd buy all of this stuff there, and I had to can. Oh yes. I made piccalilli up till about five years ago.

P: Is that right? How about (--)

M: I love to cook.

P: I bet your a good cook too.

M: But I can't no more.

P: Yah.

M: I get tired.

P: What, did you have someone come in, Meals on Wheels, or something to fix your meals now, or just your girls bring things in or?

M: They, like they'll have a supper tonight and if they have some left over, and they bring it to me the next day. Yes, yes.

P: Oh wonderful, yah.

M: Yah, they're very good to me. And I do my own. And Sunday's my Connie, the one who takes care of this Mrs. Clark, she's been with them eleven years, she comes on Sunday and she takes me out sometimes. Instead of staying in we go out.

P: Oh good!

M: Yes.

P: And who does your cleaning and (--)

M: I do my own work.

P: Oh!

M: Yes, I do my own work.

P: Gosh everything looks, nice and clean and (--)

M: Yes. And then there's a lady that come in, Sandy her name is, and I call her up and she comes in. And she does, like Thursday, yesterday she done all my dusting downstairs, and she done my all windows, and then she took my little thing and she went over my drapes.

P: Oh yah.

M: If I need help I get it.

P: Umhm, now that's good.

M: Yes.

P: Can you remember going to the dentist when you were a little girl, or how did they?

M: Oh mother pulled them out [Both laugh] with the thread, the carpet thread. They'd tie the carpet thread and pull the teeth out. My girls, oh yah, it was fifty cents when you use to go, but look at it now.

P: Oh I know, I know.

M: I lost my teeth when I carried my third one, my Lorriane.

P: Oh that's what they said, that they use to, a tooth for every.

M: I didn't drink enough milk. (P: Oh) I didn't drink enough milk and they all went chalky. I had a bridge put on here, it cost me a lot of money. And these gave out. So I had them all out. And these, I have them but I can't where them. I [knew].

P: [Laughs] Have you ever been up to Canada, Madeline or (--)

M: Oh yes, often. I had a cousin living there. This was the daughter of the one that had the farm in Tyngsboro where we use to go. And my husband took me five or six times to Canada, yes.

P: Do you still have relatives back there then, or...?

M: No I have, she died two years ago. Obeline, my cousin, she died two years ago. She was 95.

P: Oh my!

M: Yah, yah, they had a grocery up there, and four, oh more than that, about six years ago my four daughters and me, we went on a trip to Canada, and we visited my cousin, the four girls and me.

P: What part of Canada?

M: Montreal.

P: Montreal, umhm. How did you enjoy that?

M: Oh, very much. Yah, my girls did too, yes.

P: Did you take vacations when you were, oh, say other than your honeymoon, when you were growing up?

M: Oh yes. Every summer, every summer my husband would rent a cottage at the lake, or New Hampshire, wait a minute, Lake Winnepausauki we'd have a cottage every year till the last ... Now the girls all have summer homes. (P: Umhm) Three of them have summer homes, and two of them have winter homes in Florida. So I go there in the summer.

P: Oh good!

M: Yes! I go to my Gloria's and Lorriane. They have in Lake Winnesquam, they have summer home there. So I went there this summer, and I went to my, this one, they had a beautiful home in York, Maine,

P: Oh yes, that's lovely up there.

M: Yes, yes. She lives up at the Nubble Light. They built themselves a beautiful home. I think they'll be selling their home when Elizabeth gets through college. They'll sell their home in Westford and move to Maine. They like Maine.

P: Yes, they like it up there.

M: Yes.

P: Have you ever been to Florida?

M: Oh yes. I'm going again after the holidays.

P: Oh wonderful!

M: Christmas. My daughter, they have their winter home there.

P: What part of Florida?

M: Naples.

P: Oh yes, I know that. That's lovely there.

M: You know that?

P: Yes, yah. How long will you be down then?

M: About four weeks I think..

P: Umhm. Do you fly down or drive?

M: Oh I can't drive. It's too far, no. They're going to drive down. Her son's getting married the 16th of November. So they're driving down, and then there going to fly home, and for the holidays, for Christmas, and then there taking me back over the air.

P: Yah

M: Yah, they have the tickets already.

P: Oh, how do you like to fly?

M: I like to fly. I flew quite often. I flew five or six times, yah.

P: You can get places in a hurry that way too (M: Yes, yes) and you're not tired out.

M: No, I couldn't go over the road, no. No, because Sundays they take me out, or during the week, and when I come home I'm tired.

P: Your tired, yah. Well you've really lived to see a lot of different things, haven't you?

M: Yes, yes.

P: Can you remember the first radio, when that came out?

M: Yes, yes. We had a (Boss) radio, the first radio we bought. My cousin brought it from Springfield. He worked at the radio place and he bought it for us. It was a (Boss McNeedo), the name of it. And then we got a bigger one.

P: Yes, one that stood on the floor.

M: Yes.

P: Umhm.

M: Yes, and yes, the second one. That first one was on a table, a beautiful table came with it. And my kids use to sit right down there, and they'd listen to it.

P: All of the oh, Jack Benny and those type of, George Burns and Gracie Allen..

M: Yah, and Bing Crosby.

**Tape II, side A ends**  
**Tape II, side B begins**

M: ... we used to believe that, the colored story there, and she use to think that was true. She thought that was true. And when she found out it was only a story that's being repeated, you know on the tape, she couldn't get (--) She wouldn't listen to it no more.  
[Both laugh]

P: Can you remember the first movie you went to? The first talking movie?

M: Yes, the first one I went to was, "How Green Was My Valley", and he's still living. I seen him on a picture last week. "How Green Was My Valley", was the first picture.

P: Right, the first talking picture.

M: [Words unclear.]

P: Ah huh. What were the movies like before that, before the "Talkies"? Would they ah (--)

M: Put music on.

P: Oh. Did they have someone in the theater playing the piano?

M: Piano, organ.

P: Or the organ.

M: It was an organ, yes.

P: Yah.

M: Yes, at the Merrimack it was an organ. At the Strand it was Professor Martel, he played the organ there at the strand.

P: And then I guess the movies had subtitles, or (M: Yes) so you would know what the people were saying.

M: And then we'd go, I was working then in the mill, I was working where, for the flags then, we'd go to Keith. That was a Vaudeville show on Saturday night. I was older then, (P: Umhm) see, and my mother let me go with my friend Flora. Her boyfriend was in the service,. And they'd give you a few picture's of the war that was going on (P: Oh yes, yah) you know, the First World War. And they'd show picture's of different companies. And this Saturday night that we were there they showed her boyfriend.

P: Oh know.

M: He was getting the purple heart.

P: Oh, imagine that! I bet she was thrilled

M: Yes, when we saw that on there, she says, "My goodness, he never told me about it." But you know, it took so long for letters to come.

P: Yah. Did, did they come back? Did he come back and they got married?

M: He came back less a leg. (P: Oh) He lost his leg.

P: But they got married then?

M: Yes! When he come home they got married. I was bride's maid for her.

P: Oh nice. Would you go out? Were ice cream parlors popular then?

M: Yes, we use to go on Merrimack Street to Boston Confectionary place, and you'd sit in the back there, and have a nice big dish of ice cream, with nuts, chocolate sauce on it, for ten cents, fifteen cents.

P: Oh yah. Did they have marble top tables then too?

M: Yes, yes, yes. We use to stop there, or we stop at the Lowell Pharmacy and, or it was so warm they used to have these in there (--)



P: All the fans, right. Uh huh.

M: The fans in the drug stores, yah,

P: Right, right.

M: And we'd take our time to eat so we'd be cool.

P: That was before air conditioning?

M: Yes, yes.

P: So you'd have to go in there to cool off.

M: Yah, oh yes. After Sodality, I belonged to Sodality, (clears throat) and after the Sodality on Sunday we'd take a walk.

P: What was that Madeline? What was the Sodality, was that a (--)

M: This was the girls up to 18 years old of the parish.

P: Oh.

M: We joined this Sodality. It was like a society you know.

P: Yah.

M: And every Sunday (clears throat) at 1:00 was our meeting, and after the meeting well we'd go down Merrimack Street, yow know, take a walk, the girls, and we'd stop in for ice cream.

P: For ice cream. What would you do at the meeting? Would they just ?

M: The priest, the priest would make a sermon.

P: Ah huh.

M: And guide us, it was like a guidance.

P: I see.

M: Yes. And then when you got 18 you joined the bigger girls Sodality.

P: Umhm. Was it all girls too?

M: All girls, yes.

P: All girls.

M: And then the boy's had a Sodality of their, Holy Angels they called them.

P: Umhm.

M: Yes.

P: And how long did you belong to that? Just really till you (--)

M: Till I got married.

P: Till you got married.

M: Then I joined the married women's. When my Beatrice's was born I joined the married women's, Saint Anne's Sodality. And I'm a 50 year member on that now.

P: Oh they still have it today.

M: Yes, yes.

P: Oh wonderful.

(Paper boy delivers paper)

M: Thank you.

P: There's your paperboy.

M: Bye bye dear.

P: Were papers delivered in your day when you were, say when you were still?

M: I don't remember. The French paper was.

P: Umhm

M: The French paper, because the lady upstairs took the French paper, and that's how my mother learned to talk, to read French.

P: Oh I see.

M: From that, the French paper.

P: Uh huh.

M: But I don't remember mother getting the paper.

P: Yah.

M: I guess we were to poor.

P: To, to have that delivered. What, what kind of things did you do in the winter? Did they have sleigh rides, or (--)

M: Yah, we use to take our sleds and go up on the north common up on the hill there, and we'd slide way down to Salem Street.

P: Ah!. [Laughs]

M: Yes, after school.

P: Yah.

M: Yah.

P: How about ice skating? Did they ice skate on the Merrimack?

M: Yes, I use to ice skate at the river.

P: At the Merrimack?

M: The Merrimack, yah.

P: Umhm.

M: Where the boat house is now.

P: Right.

M: They have a boat house there, and it used to be the Daniel Gage Ice House use to be there, but see there's no more ice.

P: Yah.

M: So they knocked that down, and we use to go skating on the river. Oh the ice was about (--)

P: Was so... yes, because it was colder then, yah. And they, did the boys play hockey on the ice?

M: No.

P: No, that wasn't (--)

M: No, no, no. We'd just get four or five of us together and hold hands, and just skate. We'd go as far as Tyngsboro Bridge. Yah, we use to have fun, yah.

P: Hm. Would they have any sleigh rides? Were the horses pulling the sleighs or?

M: Oh yes, yes, but I never went to that.

P: Ah huh.

M: No, but they had them.

P: How would they clear the streets of the snow in the winter when it would get?

M: The city had men come. They had plows but not like big ones like they have today, (P: umhm) they had the regular housedrawn plows, you know.

P: I see.

M: Yes, and they used to clear the streets. And then they had the city workers come and do (P: The sidewalks and such) sidewalks, yah.

P: Yah. What were the streets like downtown? Were they cobblestone, or paved?

M: They were, some were cobblestone. (P: Umhm) Yes, we had cobblestone, but the roads I don't (--) Yes, they were cobblestone, and they had the car tracks, you know, for the trolleys.

They had the tracks in the middle of the road. And then they use to have the wires on the top there, when they'd turn around you know, they'd (P: Right) Yah.

P: Right.

M: I took the trolleys when I worked at the mill.

P: To get back and fourth?

M: From Pawtucket Street.

P: Yah.

M: In the morning to get to work, but at night I'd walk home.

P: Yah. And what (--) Then downtown they were lots of little shops then and the shopping. Were there 5 & 10's?

M: 5 & 10's, and we had Woolworth's, we had Kresge's, we had Newbury's on Central Street. Yes, we had the drug stores (Leggat's), and we had fur stores. We had banks. Oh!

P: Oh what were the fur stores?

M: Weiners, they were at the corner of Palmer Street, Palmer Street and Merrimack. Now that's the road you take to go down to Pollard's. Have you been to Pollard's?

P: No, I never have.

M: No?

P: No.

M: They have a nice restaurant.

P: Do they?

M: Pollard's, but that use to be a dry goods store, fur store. They had furs in Pollards too.

P: Furs, for like furs coats and things (M: Yes), for ladies fur caps and muffs, and that type of thing.

M: Yes. I had bought myself a beautiful scarf. It was made like a round here, and a round in the shoulders, and then it came down in a point here and on this side in the back, and I had the muff. Nutria, Nutria it like beaver.

P: Oh yes!

M: Yes.

P: Yah. Was that before you were married, or?

M: Yes [both laugh]. Yes, that's right. My mother had me pay my board when I was twenty four.

P: Umhm.

M: She said I had helped her long enough. So I paid my board when I was twenty-four. So I had to dress myself up.

P: Would you buy ready made clothing, or would your mother still make your clothing for you then?

M: Oh no, no. Things like during the summer, summer dresses (P: Yah) but the suits and coats I bought.

P: You bought them, umhm.

M: Yes.

P: And where would you buy them at at?

M: Bon Marche or Pollard's. Oh you getting cold? I'll shut the door!

P: [Sneezes] Excuse me.

M: [Tape is turned off then on again] They used to have a park, you know.

P: They had parks then for the children to play in?

M: Yes, yah, but now everybody is building on (--) Terrible. In the back here my children use to go and play all the time, and they, they had a lot of fun there. And then they'd skate in back over here. Everything is all built up now.

P: Oh did they have roller skating when you were a young girl?

M: Yes, (P: Was that popular?) but I never went rollerskating. No. But my girls did. (P: Yah) Yah, they liked roller skating.

P: Did they have anything like Girl Scouts, or were your girls active in that, or were you active in anything?

M: They had (--)

P: Campfire Girls, or (--)

M: The Guards. They had uniforms and the little caps. And my (--)

P: Oh the Color Guards?

M: Yes, St. Jeanne D'Arc Guards they called it. Yah, they had, my Gloria belonged to that, my Connie, and my baby, them three they belonged to that.

P: Uh huh.

M: That was a lot of work.

P: Did you have to make the uniforms and?

M: No, no, but you had to keep them up.

P: Oh.

M: Yah. And then you had to curl their hair you know. My little one was only three years old, and they had her marching to 30th of May Parade, Memorial Day Parade.

P: Memorial Day Parade.

M: The work.

P: So it was more of a marching group?

M: The others would like to belonged to that, but I couldn't have six of them.

P: Oh boy, yes.

M: I had three (P: Yes) and then you had to pay (P: Uh huh) you know, I had to pay the dues.

P: Now did you make all of your children's clothing? Your girls' clothing?

M: I did. I made a lot, yes.

P: Now did you, did you make all your children clothing, your girls clothing?

M: I did. I made a lot yes. Like Easters, Easter Sunday there, I'd have to dye their white gloves the color of there (--)

P: Of their outfit? Oh! [Laughs] Did you dress them all alike, too?

M: And make, and make little hats.

P: Make their little hats.

M: I had 2 by 2 that I dressed alike.

P: Umhm.

M: Connie and Thelma, I dressed them alike, and Lorraine and Gloria. But as they grew older they bought their own. They didn't get married too young, my girls. I was very fortunate to keep them.

P: Yes, and they lived at home until they got married?

M: All of them, yes. I have three that got married young, 21, 20, but the others were 24, 23, and 25.

P: Umhm.

M: So. But I worked hard. I'd sew till twelve, one o'clock in the morning, yah. It was hard.

P: Well it must have agreed with you. [Both laugh]

M: I'm still here!

P: Yes, right.

M: Well that was the good care I got.

P: Yah.

M: I had a good man.

P: And good (--).

M: Good children.

P: And good children.

M: They never gave me any trouble,

P: Oh.

M: I never had trouble with my children.

P: Umhm, that's good. And then you also have good genes from all your relatives that have lived long.

M: Yes. Yes!

P: So that all, all helps.

M: My father died young though. (P: Uh huh) He was 61.

P: You say your sister lived in Springfield.

M: Yes.

P: So she didn't (--) Did you get to see much of her?



M: Oh, she'd come all the time.

P: Would she, cause your mother was here. So she'd come over.

M: Yes, oh yes she'd come to mother's yes. Oh yes, with her children, one, two, she had four. She lost her fifth, but she had four. And every, every summer she was here with her children.

P: Umhm.

M: And after mother died she came with her husband, yah.

P: Umhm.

M: We were just the two of us.

P: Oh yah, right. Right.

M: I'm glad my children are close, that close.

P: Yes.

M: Yah, they stay together.

P: That means a lot, right. Right, that mean a lot.

M: Yah, [unclear].

P: Well you've seen a lot of changes in Lowell then?

M: Oh yes, yes.

P: Haven't you? How it's grown up and (--)

M: Belvidere too, where I worked there in the Bunting Mill for the flags (P: Umhm) you know, That's all changed around there.

P: Is it

M: Oh yes.

P: How has it changed? Is it more?

M: Oh they knocked everything down. All of those mills are gone. There was the Amosgoeg Mill. There use to be a French box place where they made boxes, and then the New England Bunting where I worked.

P: Umhm.

M: That's all gone.

P: All? Is it turned into housing developments now, and (--)

M: Yes, and it's the Puerto Ricans have come in there. They're all there now.

P: Umhm.

M: It used to be just Irish and French (P: Umhm) up there. Now it's all changed. Of course a lot of us are dead too.

P: Umhm.

M: I've seen a lot of priest go. And out of my class, out of my class at St. Joesph's School (--)

P: I was going to ask you how many were in your class?

M: We were 42.

P: Umhm.

M: And I don't think there's four of us living.

P: Is that right.

M: Even in this picture I can (--) This one died last year. Her will just came out in the paper last Sunday.

P: Umhm.

M: They're all gone. They're all gone. This one died two years ago. He lived on my street here, Paul Lacouture.

P: Did most of (--)

M: Imagine that, that's a long time ago.

P: Did most of the children seem to stay in Lowell, or a lot of people didn't, that were in your class remained around here?

M: Today you here more of them moving away.

P: Yes, that's what I mean.

M: Yes, yes.

P: Right

M: But see my six girls were fortunate, huh.

P: Yah.

M: They all married around, and there staying around thank God!

P: Did they all married local people then?

M: Yes, yes.

P: Umhm.

M: Yes.

P: Except (--) Did you stay friendly when, now this is going (--)

M: None of them married a Frenchman though.

P: Oh none of them did! Oh! None of them married a Frenchmen.

M: No

P: Did you stay, when you talked about your in-laws living next door to you, when you first met your husband (M: Ya, ya), did you stay friendly with his sisters and his ?

M: Oh yes! Now they're all gone. There's only two living. And when I go to Florida the young one is there in Naples. She's a neighbor of my daughter's there. So I'll see her.

P: Ah huh.

M: And then the other one that's living now, living on Gorham Street right at the entrance of Billerica.

P: Umhm.

M: That's the only two sister's he, that's living.

P: How many children were in his family?

M: Seven children.

P: Oh seven.

M: And the father and mother. They're all gone.

P: Hm. How many boys, and how many girls?

M: There was four boys and three girls.

P: I see. And was your husband the older, one of the older boys, or one of the younger or?

M: He was the third oldest.

P: The third oldest

M: Yes. He was the third oldest.

P: Hm. Was your mother friendly with his mother?

M: Oh yes, yes.

P: Since they lived close by.

M: Yes.

P: That must have been nice.

M: Oh yes, we always stayed friendly.

P: Yah.

M: Well in those days you know you stayed home more.

P: That's right, yah.

M: You entertained at home, (P: Umhm) see. Today they have cars and they go, and you don't have a chance to meet your families.

P: That's right.

M: Like we use to do. They can't. These cars take them everywhere. Weekends instead of going visiting your folks, today they take trips.

P: They take trips,

M: Yes.

P: Yah, that's right.

M: It's the cars.

P: Yah, cars change things.

M: Yes, yes. The families are not close like they use to be.

P: No.

M: No.

P: That's right.

M: No.

[Tape is turned off, then on again]

P: Madeline is talking about when she first went to work in the mill, and was making five dollars an hour, no five dollars a week.

M: For 54 hours. Worked ten hours a day, and four hours Saturday morning. And then I got six dollars.

P: What about the other people that worked with you? Were they French Canadian too?

M: Yes. A lot of French were at the Lowell Weaving they called it, on Marginal Street where the G.E. is now.

P: Right.

M: That's the G.E.

P: Okay, I know right where it is.

M: You know where it is?

P: Ah huh.

M: Well that's where I started to work.

P: Ah huh.

M: Yes, it was the Lowell Weaving then. And I used to reel, make the reel, skeins for them, the looms, or whatever.

P: Yah. And would you (--) Who, and was there an overseer, or someone that?

M: Yes.

P: Was he French?

M: The overseer was English. He was an Englishmen, yah,

P: Like an English Yankee?

M: Yes, yes, but our boss was Irish and my floor lady was Irish, yes.

P: Umhm. And everyone got along at the mill too?

M: Oh, yes yes.

P: There was no (--)

M: It was French and Irish, that's all in the mill. They didn't have Greeks there.

P: Umhm.

M: The Greeks are more in the mills down home. Downtown.

P: Oh I see.

M: Like where my mother worked in the Boott Mill.

P: Oh yah.

M: There was a lot of Greeks there.

P: Uh huh. Did she say they got along, the Greek's in (--)

M: Yes, yes, yah. They didn't speak English so they had to get along.

P: Oh, they had to get along. [Chuckles] Yah, that's true. Then you worked there for (--)

M: Till the first World War.

P: The first World War, yah.

M: Yes, I went to work (--) No, no, no, I'm making a mistake. Where did I work the mill? Yah, we did, we moved to Pawtucketville, and that's where I went to work at the Cartridge Shop in South Lowell. I used to go (P: During the war) over the bridge and take the bus to go to work in South Lowell.

P: How did you find out about these job's, did you have a friend that recommened you, or did you just go and apply or?

M: The Cartridge Shop, my mother read it in the paper.

P: Ah, that they were hiring people.

M: They were hiring.

P: Umhm.

M: So she came with me to show me the way, you know.

P: Did they pay more money at the Cartridge Shop

M: Oh yes. Oh I made good money there. I was making up to sixty dollars a week.

P: Ooh, compared to six dollars at the other place.

M: Oh my mother liked that.

P: Yah. Now would you bring, would you give your mother all of your money?

M: Oh yes, until I was twenty-four.

P: Umhm.

M: Yah, I gave her all of my pays, and she needed it.

P: Yah, because she wasn't able to work at the time you say.

M: No.

P: So you were, you were literally supporting her.

M: Supporting her. And then my old aunt came to live with us, her sister.

P: Is this your mother's sister? Yes, and she lived with us till she died.

M: Umhm. So you supported her too? Yah. No, no, she worked.

P: Oh she worked.

M: She worked at the U.S. Bunting. She's the one that got me in the Bunting, and she showed me how to weave.

P: oh, she worked.

M: She worked at the U.S. Bunting. She's the one that got me in the Bunting, and she showed me how to weave.

P: Oh, I see.

M: Yes.

P: Uh huh. How much did you make (--)

M: She worked there 58 years, my aunt did.

P: Is that right?

M: Yah. I made good there.

P: You made better money at the Bunting then at the (--)

M: Cartridge Shop, yes.

P: Umhm.

M: Yah. That was during First World War, see, from the Cartridge Shop I went weaving.

P: Ah huh. And then you'd bring home your money and give it to your mother. Would she give you some bac for you to spend?

M: Yes. She'd give me three dollars, or four dollars.

P: Ah huh.

M: Whatever she wanted, yah. I made out all right. She bought my clothes. In those days you had one dress for Sunday you know.

P: Oh is that right.

M: Yah.



P: And then what would you wear to work? What type of clothing would you wear to work?

M: Well we had ordinary clothes.

P: Umhm.

M: Yah, we'd change every day.

P: Umhm. Was it like blouses and skirts, and dresses?

M: Skirts, yah. I had that, and dresses, but I had more blouses then skirts.

P: Yah.

M: And then when you got to the mill you had to take that off, and had like a whole apron with sleeves and all.

P: Oh, was it like, was it like a smock?

M: A smock, yes, yes.

P: But you took off your (--)

M: You took off your blouse and the skirt, yah.

P: Did they have a special room for you to change your clothing in?

M: Well they had a wash, a wash room where we used to go to the toilet and wash up, and you'd go in there. And then you'd hang it on your hanger.

P: Did you have a locker to keep your things in, or just a hook?

M: No, a hook on the wall (she giggles).

P: Ah huh.

M: Yah, you'd shake then before you'd put them on.

P: Was it dirty in the mills? So you really (--)

M: No.

P: No?

M: It wasn't dirty, but it was lint that would fly.

P: Oh I see.

M: Yah, because we had those big belts, you know, that was (P: Right) running the looms.

P: Yah. So everyone were the same kind of a smock?

M: A smock, yes.

P: Coverall. (M: Yes) Uh huh. And then at the end of the day you would take that off?

M: Yes, and put your clothes on.

P: Put it on the hook, and put your clothes back on to go home. Who would take care of the, would the mill launder the smocks or keep them clean?

M: Oh no, you brought them home and done them up yourselves.

P: Oh I see. So each person had their own smock.

M: Yes

P: Her own coverup.

M: And not only that, but they'd take, for your dinner too if you had something to warm over. They use to have a big barrel there, with the hot water in. You know, there was a pipe that went in and the steam went in that, and there was hot water all the time.

P: Ah huh.

M: So you'd put your dinner in a little can with a string, and you'd dump it into the water, and you'd leave it there for a half an hour and your dinner was warm.

P: Oh, now what kind of things would you take for your dinner?

M: My mother give me chicken soup, or she'd give me some stew.

P: Soup or stew.

M: A stew, whatever she'd make she'd put it in a jar, (P: Yah) and then we'd put it in the canister and warm it up, or sandwiches.

P: Yah. How much time would you have for your dinner?

M: Half an hour.

P: Just half an hour. Was that like in the middle of the day or?

M: At half past eleven, that's where we'd put our dinner in, half past eleven, and at 12 o'clock it was warm.

P: I see. Then you'd eat. So you'd have (--)

M: Five past twelve.

P: 12:00 to 12:30 to eat. (M: Yes) Ah huh. What if you had to go? Did you get a coffee break, or tea break in the morning, or in the afternoon?

M: No, no.

P: What if you had to go to the bathroom, or go?

M: Well, we went. You stop your loom.

P: I see, and they didn't (--).

M: Unless the girl next to you would watch it. If a thread would break, you know, she'd stop, you know.

P: Yah, so you had time to do that. So from six until twelve you had nothing to eat.

M: No.

P: And then twelve to six, 12:30 to six until you got home.

M: Yah.

P: Would you usually eat your big meal then in the middle of the day, or would your mother have a big meal in the evening?

M: Mother have the big meal at night (P: Ah huh) for my aunt and I. Yah, we'd have the big meal at night.

P: Ah huh.

M: So it would be a sandwich with the soup. If we had beef stew she'd just give me bread and butter to eat with that.

P: What would you drink, tea or coffee?

M: Well we warmed up the water, we warmed up the water, and we'd bring, we had tea bags.

P: Oh did they have tea bags?

M: Yah, but there was little round balls we had in those days, (P: Oh yah) and we'd have the tea bags, or some had cocoa, they'd make their cocoa.

P: Umhm.

M: A lot of them made cocoa. The old maids there, they all had cocoa.

P: But they didn't sell anything in the mill for you to eat?

M: No, no no.

P: They didn't have anything (--)

M: Oh no, not in those days, no. That came about twenty years after (P: Oh) that they started that. [Clears throat]

P: Well you must have been rushed if you got home from the mill and then just had a short time and had a to get ready to go to school.

M: That's what I said, yah. (P: Yes) Oh no, I worked at the Lowell Weaving when I went to school.

P: Oh, ah huh.

M: Yes. Well it was the same way. (P: Yah) I'd get home at 6 o'clock, at half past six, have my supper. The supper was ready. I'd have my supper, then I'd go and wash up and I'd go to school. Cross the common, come home. We'd get out of school quarter past nine. I'd come home and do my homework for the next night, because see, I had to get up early in the morning.

P: Yes.

M: And my mother didn't leave the lights on. She'd put the lamp on the table, and that's how I done my homework.

P: [Repeat's] How would you done your homework.

M: The lamp.

P: Oh. Well you must of been ambitious, because I think a lot of girls just stop school, you know, say after 9th grade. Did your mother want you to go on, or was this something you wanted to do?

M: No it was myself, because I had gone one year at high school, and my girlfriends, they were going to day school because they had their father, you know.

P: I see.

M: And I couldn't go to day school. So I said to ma, "I'll finish at night." And I did.

P: And you did. Had your sister finished High School?

M: No,

P: No.

M: No.

P: No, she (--)

M: She left school in the 8th grade, and she went to work. (P: Ah huh) She had to help Ma.

P: But this was just something that you wanted to do so you (--)

M: Yes, I wanted to have my high school diploma.

P: Your high school diploma, that's wonderful. How far in school (--)

M: There was 93 that graduated with me.

P: Now did boys and girls go to separate school's in those days?

M: High school?

P: The high school.

M: No, no, they were all together.

P: Ah huh.

M: Yes, yah.

P: So there were 93 in your class.

M: Yes, 93.

P: What year?

M: 1914.

P: 1914.

M: I have my diploma upstairs.

P: Class of 1914, yah.

M: Yah, 1914 I graduated from high school. So I was seventeen.

P: Right.

M: You want to see my picture?

P: Oh sure.

M: [Giggles] And then my graduation picture there, mother had a great big one. She had a great big one made. And my Connie, my fourth daughter, when mother moved here I didn't have room to put all her frames up. (P: Yah) So she had them in her closet. So Connie asked her for it, and she gave it to her. And she just had (--)

P: Oh, touched up and put in a new frame. Yes, yah. Oh I bet. Well it's a lovely picture.

Madeline just showed me some picture's of her family. And she showed me a picture of her great grandmother, who was a Iroquois Indian, and she was married to a Frenchman.

M: Choquette

P: A Choquette, and the picture is on a tintype, and that was very interesting. She also showed me her graduation from high school picture.

M: 1914.

P: From 1914, and also some, well it looks like a report card.

M: Yes, report card, every month.

P: Every month. And it says "Carte de Honor." Does that mean you were on (--)

M: Yes, honor card.

P: Honor card. Does that mean that you were an honor student, or doing very well?

M: Yes. Those that weren't honor students, they had the blue instead of gold.

P: I see. Now what grade would this have been? Um, it says here second.

M: 1907. So, wait a minute, I was 10 years old.

P: 10 years old.

M: And I was seven. It must have been the 4th grade.

P: Ah huh.

P: And then you said if you were failing you got a, what color?

M: A blue.

P: A blue card.

M: Blue card.

P: That's very, very nice. And then would you get report cards at the end of the year?

M: At the end of the year they gave you a big one, and (P: Umhm) tell (--) Every month, every year rather you'd go and have the sister sign it.

P: Sign it. What were some of the subjects that you took in school?

M: Oh we had all. We had arithmetic, we had catechism, we had spelling, we had English grammer, we had French grammer, or we had alot of studies.

P: Hm. Did you (--)

M: I didn't talk French you know. We couldn't talk French at home because my father didn't talk French..

P: Umhm.

M: So when mother decided I'd go to the French school to learn French, and that's where I started. I was 9 years old (P: Umhm), almost, when I went to the French school.

P: To the French school.

M: I went two years to the Cross St. School and then I went to the French school to learn French. It was hard for me to learn French.

P: I bet at that age, yes. Yah, I bet at that age. And then what courses did you take when, in (--) So.

M: Regular, the regular course.

P: The regular courses that they take today.

M: Regular course, yes.

P: And then history, and (--)

M: And high school, high school I had spelling and I had history, and I had arithmetic. (P: umhm) They said they call it mathemathics in there, (P: Umhm) it was arithmetic us. And we had the long division and short (both giggle). Ah, what was the other one? Oh, calisthenics.

P: Ah huh, was that like gym?

M: Gym.

P: Yah. What would you do in that? Did they ah?

M: They showed you how to walk. And then she'd tell you how to throw your arm this way, and throw your arm that way. And you'd recite. She'd make you recite poems.

P: Oh while you were doing these exercises?

M: Yes.

P: Ah huh.

M: Yah, the "Three Trees."

P: [Giggles]

M: Yes.

P: Oh the (--) Did you have English in school too, and you had to learn poems and things in English class?

M: Yes, yes we had that in high school.

P: In high school, umhm.

M: In high school, not in the French School, no. But they give you plenty of homework in the French School. It was awful. I'd stay up till 10:00-11:00 at night studying.

P: The teachers were pretty strict then too?

M: Yes.

P: That you had to finish your work and (--)



**Interview ends.**